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Online Magazine



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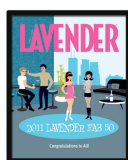


Randy Roberts Potts

Available on [www.LavenderMagazine.com](http://www.LavenderMagazine.com): Our Online Magazine, read it at your computer. Prizes, register to win. Articles, read more of the *Lavender* interview with Randy Roberts Potts.

## ON THE COVER

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Volume 17, Issue 430 • November 17-30, 2011

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Letters are subject to editing for grammar, punctuation, space, and libel. They should be no more than 300 words. Letters must include name, address, and phone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Priority will be given to letters that refer to material previously published in Lavender Magazine. Submit letters to Lavender Magazine, Letters to the Editor, 3715 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55407; or e-mail <editor@lavendermagazine.com>.

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## Gifts. Holidays. Giving. Doing. Showing. Asking.

Researching and sourcing items for the Gift Guide has as much to do with you, as the readers, as it does with us, as the writers. We think about what you might want, being members of this community, but we also think of what we might want, being similar members. We hope that by thinking about what we might like, it might resonate with what you might like. The same happens with every article that is written: "What might the readers want to read?" is hand in hand with "What might I like to read?" Then, when we have a wide representation of writers, we get closer to meeting the needs of the community. Or, so we hope.

Have you noticed just how diverse this community is? How many facets there are to this diamond? It's brilliant.

We're not quite there in our goals of being representative, but we're getting closer every day. So, I would like to run my Wish List past you and see if it resonates. Let's see if by articulating my wishes they might turn into another set of gifts. For you.

### An Editor's Wish List:

1. Feedback. If you want something or like something, let us know. If you dislike something or have a suggestion as to what we're missing, clue us in. The more you can tell us, the better.
2. Give us story ideas. At this point, the Editorial area at Lavender has undergone a reorganization of Franklin-Covey proportions. We are more equipped than ever to take your ideas and thoughts and news. If we have been remiss in the past, we apologize. We're listening now and, though it may not be immediate, we hope to follow-up on any leads you send our way.
3. Use our online Calendar. Yes, let us know that you've got an event in case we want to cover it, but please take the control in your hands to upload your events so our community can see them. Because I ask for feedback (see also #1) and story ideas (see also #2), our resources need to be dedicated elsewhere. Your events are just as important, so please share them.
4. Ask the businesses you use if they would consider partner-

ing with Lavender for advertising. No, we don't want to return to the days when we looked like a "shopper," but yes, advertising is a healthy relationship for publications to have benefiting both the advertisers and the readership. Just think if every reader asked a business about advertising in the community's publication—it would have a ripple effect that would benefit the whole community, simply by illustrating how important it is for this community to be part of the larger business conversation.

5. Ask us how we can help your business. It's a funny thing, how the GLBT community fits into the categories of small business, big business, minority-owned business. It does, to be certain. And, there are success stories and stories of struggle that span well beyond sexual orientation and identity, but how? What does it mean? We want to know your business, how you do it, and how you can share with the community what you've learned as you go.

6. Tell a few people about us. About one in every ten conversations that I have about *Lavender* includes a moment when I think, "Have you cracked open one of our magazines lately?" When I hear, "You don't cover women's issues." "I don't see any people of color." "Is Mr. Andy Lien available?" "When did you go glossy?" "It's all bars and sex." We have a tremendous growth opportunity here...and, the converse of all those statements are not bad, in and of themselves. We can cover men...and white people...and I can be a guy...and we could be in newsprint...and content about bars and sex isn't bad content... but, we're moving into a broader spectrum. I understand that I have to make sure that the proof is in the pudding. But, if you were to simply name-drop *Lavender* in your circle of friends or colleagues, it may jog a thought in their minds that maybe they should give us a second glance (or third...fourth, even).

And there it is. I'm sure I'll think of things as I'm falling asleep that I wish I would have included, but really...I've asked for enough.

Groan if you want, I'm going to say it anyway: Your readership is a gift. And we are grateful.

Andy 






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## School Priorities: Socialization or Survival?

THIS PAST month yet another gay teen, Ottawa 10th grader Jamie Hubley, committed suicide after having endured bullying since 7th grade.

Hubley blogged, had friends and peers who cared, but still the loneliness and pervasive became unsupportable. Aware of the "It Gets Better" movement, he nevertheless wrote in his last message, "I don't want to wait 3 more years. This hurts too much. How do you even know It will get better? Its not."

An October 24 *TIME* magazine article titled, "A Separate Peace?" profiled the Alliance School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This specifically gay-friendly (though not all gay) school has 165 students, each of whom was bullied or tormented in his/her previous school situation.

"The hallways," *TIME* notes, "are filled with masculine girls, effeminate boys, punks, goths, runts, the overweight and the ultra-nerds."

The piece noted several objections to this kind of institution: Some conservatives object to any school that "makes sexuality a part of a child's or school's identity," while developmental experts and many gay activists feel a child's coping skills will be stunted.

But not all bullied children are gay, and one can't promote coping skills for the dead. A child's basic job at school is to learn. Not how to stay alive, but to acquire skills he or she will need to cope in life beyond school; to walk through school hallways without taunts, physical threats or injuries. Perhaps even to enjoy the learning process.

Coping skills and promoting an "atmosphere of respect on all campuses," is the ideal, but it's not happening soon enough for the less hardy. With alternatives schools, taxpayers would not be paying for a child's sexual orientation, but rather for our collective inability to assure the safety of all students whatever their distinguishing "marker."

Until such a time arrives, alternative programs offer needed protection. This by no means lessens all the good that the "It Gets Better" efforts have done and is doing. No doubt the knowledge that they are valued has enabled many students to soldier on, and I don't doubt that lives have been saved. But it must be implemented.

In a barnyard, stronger chickens peck weaker or different birds to death. Get strong or die. That barnyard mentality cannot be allowed to inform American classrooms. ■



Melissa Houghtaling

Rebecca Heltzer



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## Lavender's New Website: Our Community – Online, Part 2

IN THE last issue, the website tour included the up-  
per navigation to find the Online Magazine and the Cal-  
endar for submitting events. This time, let's talk about  
articles and submission guidelines.

If there is a boom and a bust to expanding from a print-  
dominant media platform to a online-plus-print platform  
it's that there is an overwhelming excitement that is tem-  
pered by a, "Okay, but what does it mean?" Basically, we've  
heard a resounding "YES!" and a quiet "...what?"

You've read about it in other publications—the death  
of print, the predominance of all-things-online. It's partially hype, it's  
somewhat true. Our publication will still be printed with photos and  
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ing how to reach this community. You have much to say, we have  
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**RADAR**

## GLIMPSES

E.B. Boatner



Photo courtesy of Minneapolis Kennel Club

### Going to the Dogs at Canterbury Park

More than 1,200 dogs will be shown at the Minneapolis Kennel Club Dog Show at Shakopee's Canterbury Park, November 19-20. Participating dogs come from every American Kennel Club's recognized group: sporting, hound, working, terrier, toy, non-sporting and herding. Handlers come from across the country to participate—junior showmanship is for handlers 9 to 17 years old. Local handlers Dick Rueter and Lee Roehl have taken over the vendor chairperson's duties this year; Rueter shows Cairn terriers, while Roehl shows Bichons Frises. This year's show will feature an exhibit of rare and newly-recognized breeds. For more information visit [www.minneapoliskc.org](http://www.minneapoliskc.org). "The Komondor is representative of some of the rare breeds that can be seen at the show."

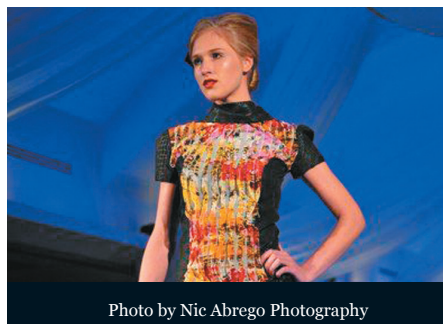


Photo by Nic Abrego Photography

### Fashion Students Showcase at Girlfriends Expo & Getaway

"We're planning a visual smorgasbord!" says apparel design student Brianna Westlund. "Each of us brings a unique and distinctive sense of style and design to the cutting table." Girlfriends Expo & Getaway (November 18-19 at Treasure Island Resort and Casino), is presented by current apparel design students and graduates of St. Kate's Fashion and Apparel program. Models will strut the runway wearing 25-40 different looks; casual ready-to-wear and business clothes to cocktail ensembles; updated retro-inspired apparel; evening wear; and whimsical, edgy alternative fashions. Westlund emphasizes that today's fashion industry places greater emphasis on personal style and panache rather than focusing on creating 'age appropriate' clothing. "Few of us believe that we should place restrictions on who can wear what, based upon their age group. We feel that the emphasis should be placed not on what is worn but how it is worn, and how it makes you feel." Visit [www.thegirlfriendsexpo.com](http://www.thegirlfriendsexpo.com). □



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A photograph of a shirtless male dancer with a muscular build, standing behind a bar. He is looking directly at the camera. The background is a colorful, abstract graphic.

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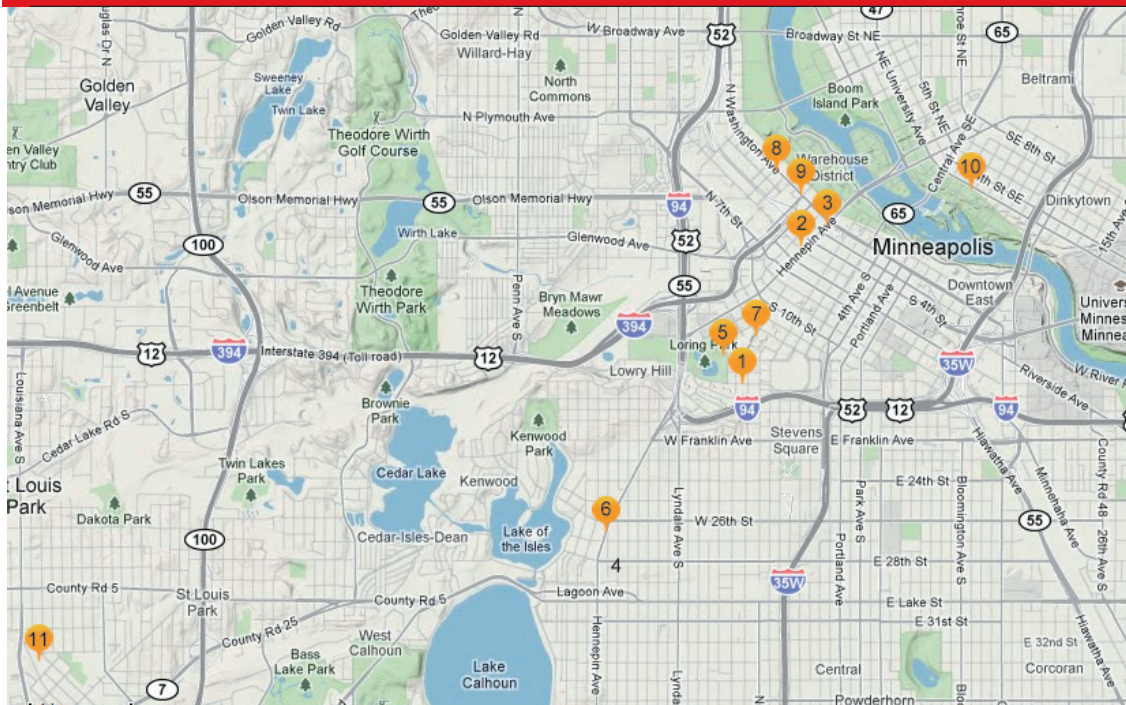
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## 2. BRASS RAIL

Completely remodeled elegant lounge featuring male dancers five nights a week, Wednesday-Sunday. 422 Hennepin Ave., Mpls. (612) 332-RAIL (7245). [www.thebrassrailounge.com](http://www.thebrassrailounge.com)

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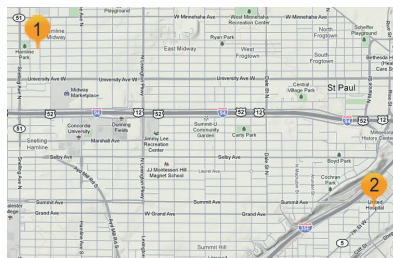
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by George Holdgrafer



Photo by George Holdgrafer

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*Ajax in Iraq.* Photo by Tony Nelson

➔ **Ajax in Iraq** — Context first. The warrior Ajax in Sophocles's tragedy, also a legendary figure in ancient Greece, was slighted by his military superiors. This triggered his vengeance impulse, which made him vulnerable to Pallas Athena, who then tricked him into a killing spree. The goddess made him imagine that various farm animals were actually the commanders at whom he was so enraged.

In Ellen McLaughlin's acclaimed drama there are parallel narratives. Ajax appears as both Ajax (Rich Remedios) the Greek and as his present day female version, A.J. (Katie Guentzel), an American soldier in Iraq. The 'slight' A.J. suffers is that of not being recognized for her bravery and for being humiliated by her commanding officer.

A few years ago director Wendy Knox directed another Iraq play, Judith Thompson's *Palace of the End*, which dealt with Lynndie England of Abu

Ghraib infamy. Though A.J. and England are radically different characters, Knox points out that in both plays "the culture of the military seems an obvious challenge for women. With *Ajax in Iraq*, a friend who does training for sexual harassment prevention in the military joined us to talk about his experiences. From his perspective, the relatively small numbers of women in the military reinforce their need to prove themselves up to the task. His observation is that women are reluctant to show their femininity, as that is equated with weakness. The numbers of women who are raped—one in three—by their comrades is astounding."

As for those who may be unsympathetic toward any soldier whose job implicitly is to kill for his or her country, McLaughlin recognizes a distinction between being a soldier and a nation's military policy. Those who struggle with the the advancement of gays in the military being an evolutionary leap and yet lament what that military does, will relate. Note that McLaughlin is also the actual actress who originated the role of The Angel in Tony Kushner's consummately humanistic *Angels in America*, so you can be sure she has wrestled with this paradox or contradiction, however you want to frame it. Recall too, how a generation ago, gay serviceman Leonard Matlovich discussed the irony of being denied the right to love men but as a soldier he was given the right to kill men.

Frank Theatre dramaturg Steve Matuszak calls *Ajax in Iraq* a "kind of subconscious to the contemporary story, emphasizing that contemporary objections to the current wars that the US engages in are echoes of struggles raised throughout the ages. The parallel stories of a Greek warrior and a contemporary soldier both point to the inability of making sense of war, no matter what the context."

In addition, Knox calls it an "examination of how war has been a crazy-making proposition throughout history. The play has a poetic resonance in our time." Though misogyny and militarism have long haunted America's cultural landscape, this past war decade has raised alarm and consciousness on these counts in a way unimaginable, and unreported in years and decades past. (*TIME* and *Democracy Now!* have investigated US military rape in the past few years.)

Civil Rights attorney Lori Peterson observes that "women and gays in civilian life are extremely reluctant to come forward with complaints of harassment and abuse. In the military, that reluctance increases a hundred-fold. That trepidation, and the failure of leaders to effectively prevent it, intervene or impose appropriate consequences, embolden those who harass and abuse." **Through Nov. 27 • Playwrights Center, 2301 E. Franklin Av., Mpls. • (612) 724-3760 • [www.franktheatre.org](http://www.franktheatre.org)**

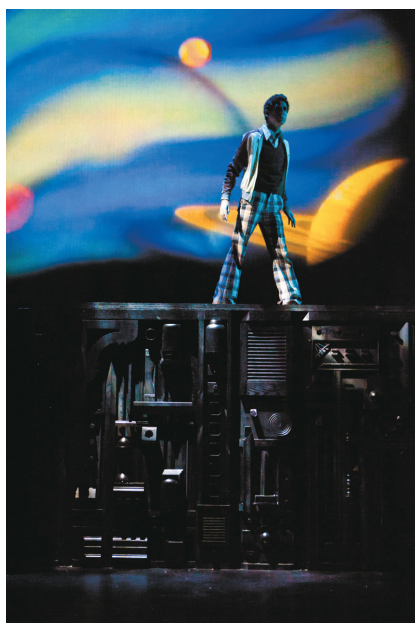
**The Edge of Our Bodies** — One of America's most thought-provoking Gen X playwrights delves into teen turmoil featuring Ali Rose Daxis. Director Ben McGovern observes "Adam Rapp's plays are full of unflinching and deeply truthful observations of humanity. They often contain troubling paradoxes about getting what we need to satisfy our own needs and the damage we do to people in that pursuit. For that reason he is sometimes looked at as having a cynical view of humanity, but a closer look shows that his characters are in search of a deep, almost spiritual connection to the world around them." **Through Nov. 20 • Guthrie Theater, 818 Second St. S., Mpls. • (612) 377-2224 • [www.guthrietheater.org](http://www.guthrietheater.org)**



**A Wrinkle in Time** — Travel between dimensions of space, inner and outer, may seem better suited to film than stage. But John Gloré's stage adaptation of Madeline L'Engle's classic 1962 children's book shows that comparatively simple theatricalization can miraculously yield visionary results.

This is sci-fi fantasy that never loses its humanity. The story of a misfit sister and brother who traverse planes of reality and existence in search of their father who went missing because of a secret government experiment in another dimension, is given great heart by young actors Helena Scholz-Carlson and Brandon Brooks as the siblings and Noah Crandell as their fellow misfit.

Director Greg Banks's impeccably paced cast also includes the vibrant adults, Ann Michels, Autumn Ness, and Pearce Bunting. Marvelously enhanced by Rebecca Fuller Jensen's eerily beautiful lighting and Victor Zupanc's evocative sound design and music. **Children's Theatre, 2400 Third Av. S., Mpls. • (612) 874-0400 • [www.childrenstheatre.org](http://www.childrenstheatre.org)**



*A Wrinkle in Time.* Photo Courtesy of Children Theater Company

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### Gender & Sexuality at Minneapolis Underground Film Festival

— This year's MUFF is the most forthrightly GLBT-inclusive yet. Co-curators Mark Hanson and Greg Yolen have slated some eye-poppers that will definitely linger in your mind long afterwards. Local filmmaker Tyler Jensen's queer sensibility infuses the captivating *30 Films 30 Days*, a film notebook of sorts that ingeniously keeps you wondering if it's a documentary or scripted. The line between the two is blurred and that's part of the fun of watching it. Eclectic observations that include women shooting images of women in an indoor practice range, drag artist Foxy Tann warning against a disease called 'glitter lung', and zombies in dire need of caffeine, always go where you don't expect them.

LA filmmaker Eric Casaccio's *Freak* portrays the near suicidal mindset of a trans actor whose career is on the skids. Financially unsettling phone messages and rejection by an image-conscious neighbor are darkly funny and in sync with our currently rough economic times. Aaron Merken gives a powerhouse performance that could have been laughably camp, but instead, is an anguished look inside a desperate soul.

*Genderfckation* is a stimulating potpourri of various Minnesotans who have defied binary gender labels. Its best moments are in touching interviews with the mother of trans activist, Andrea Jenkins and transwoman Leigh Smythe's son frankly and vulnerably sharing his perspective. Jenkins, Smythe, and musician Jendeen Forberg tell personal stories that are illuminating, giving us a range of how trans people integrate into society over time. Filmmaker Chris Durant has drenched the film with interesting but widely varied comments from academics and other titled folks. While this is often engaging it makes the film overly intellectualized. In fact, one interviewee talks about the advantage of college degrees in understanding gender!

Off the charts! That's all that can be said of *Profane*. This is one of the most heretical and daring visions of sexuality ever filmed, transgressive in a way comparable to how *Last Tango in Paris* was 40 years ago and *Shortbus* five years ago. Iraqi-American filmmaker Usama Alshaibi probes the psyche and milieu of Muna, a Muslim dominatrix for whom extreme kink and piety are blended seamlessly into her life. Manal Kara gives what is simply one of the most courageous and sexually penetrating performances ever filmed. It's on a par with the sexual breakthrough performances of the iconic films of Nagisa Oshima (*In the Realm of the Senses*, *Taboo*). Moreover, erotic guilt-driven fantasies of the American soldier comprise an added fascinating layer to this magnificent work. Arguably the best movie ever to be set in Chicago.

Another out of town film to watch for is *Bronze*, New Yorker Steve Strauss's examination of sexual boundaries in the lives of three teenaged girls. It muses on issues of accountability, responsibility, and consent. **Dec. 2-4 • Minneapolis College of Art & Design, 2501 Stevens Av. • [www.minneapolisundergroundfilmfestival.com](http://www.minneapolisundergroundfilmfestival.com)**



*Underground Film Fest, Trisha Harms as 'Lady Buttercream'. Photo by Tyler Jensen*

**Zenon at the Cowles** — Revered dance companies build their stellar reputations not only on excellence but on memorable dance pieces that are deemed worth reviving. *Zenon*, the adored modern and jazz dance troupe, celebrates some of their favorites in their first Cowles Center run. If you missed Danny Buraczeski's exhilarating Swing Concerto and Morgan Thorson's examination of the body, *Deluxe Edition*, a ticket will get you in to see them together in an evening of modernist and postmodern passion. Not to mention, new works by Daniel Charon and Mariusz Olszewski. **Through Nov. 27 • Cowles Center for Dance & the Performing Arts, 528 Hennepin Av., Mpls. • (612) 206-3600 • [www.thecowlescenter.org](http://www.thecowlescenter.org)**

**Picnic at Choreographers' Evening** — Jaime Carrera, perhaps the Twin Cities' most sexually daring performance artist, brings to mind 1990s transgressors who flew smack in the face of Republican Senator Jesse Helms's crusade against publicly funded art that evoked erotic, especially homoerotic, energy. He cuts through what he calls our "fog of sex panic" and calls his latest "my heteronormative piece with vulgar movement. I made a list of sexual gestures and formed dance around it." Featuring Kimberly Lesik. **Sat., Nov. 26 at 7 & 9:30 pm • Walker Art Center, 1750 Hennepin Av., Mpls. • (612) 375-6000 • [www.walkerart.org](http://www.walkerart.org)** □



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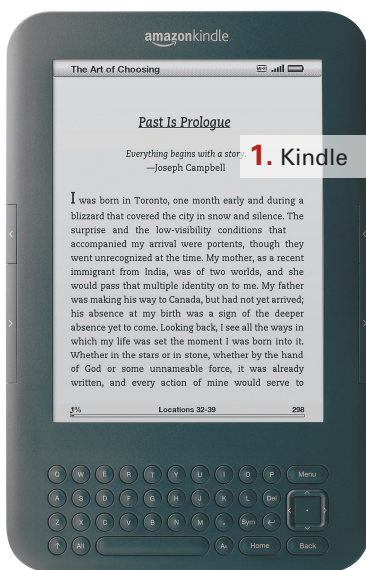
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Brad Traynor

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#### 2. Toshiba Thrive

ToshibaDirect.com, \$379  
After my ancient desktop computer finally crashed earlier this year, I decided to take a big leap beyond laptops and try out the world of tablets. I settled on the beautiful, feature-rich Thrive from Toshiba. It's not an iPad... and thank God! The Thrive, with all its extras, like dual cameras, HDMI/USB ports and expandable memory, all running on Android's Honeycomb, deserves its place at the front of the tablet pack.

#### 3. iPod Nano

Apple.com, \$129-\$149  
After my last iPod bit the digital dust, I shopped around for the latest in mp3 players. I wanted something smaller and un-clunkier than the classic pack of cigarette-sized iPod for the gym or my morning commute. Luckily for me, Apple released their latest incarnation of the iPod nano. The wee little wonder player clips itself to your coat or waistband, sports an FM radio, super easy multi-touch screen and storage space for tons of music.

#### 4. Samsung Galaxy S™ II

T-Mobile, Starting at \$229  
My first smartphone was actually dumb. It was super slow, clunky, and had few apps that rarely, if ever, worked. I decided to trade it in for something sexier. Shopping my options, I came across the most beautiful non-iPhone smartphone in all the land. The Galaxy S2 is ridiculously awesome. Big screen, 4G fast and runs on Android, the phone finally syncs my life in a way that's worth the high price of a mobile data plan.

#### 5. Amazon Prime Membership

Amazon.com, \$79 annually  
Not to be too Amazon heavy in this year's gift guide, but the gift of Amazon Prime membership is worth giving to almost anyone on your list. Seriously. Not only does the membership mean free 2-day shipping (next day for only \$3.99), it also gets the gifted free access to over 10,000 movies and TV shows. And, if they're a Kindle owner, they now get access to Amazon's brandspankin new e-book lending library. Worth every annual penny.

Extended until May 26!

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## YULE BE SWINGIN'

"Among all the local choral concerts, this is the one that feels most like a holiday party, where clever arrangements of seasonal songs are flowing like egg nog!"

– Rob Hubbard, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*

Friday, December 9 – 8 pm | Saturday, December 10 – 8 pm  
Sunday, December 11 – 2 pm | Ted Mann Concert Hall

The Chorus joins the McNally Smith College Jazz Band to celebrate the big band era and the sounds of the season!

TICKETS: [tickets.umn.edu](http://tickets.umn.edu) OR 612-624-2345

[tcgmc.org](http://tcgmc.org)



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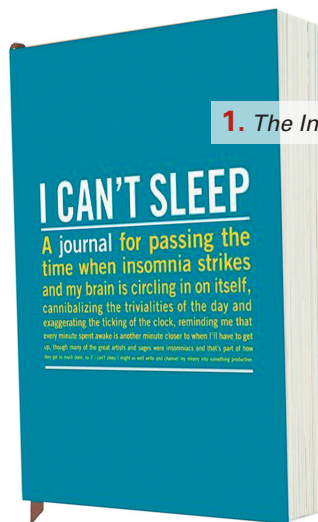
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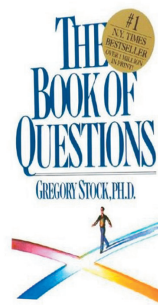
Visit us at [Linders.com](http://Linders.com) for more information.

## Gift GUIDE

1. The Insomnia Journal



2. Books of Questions



3. Michael Khors Nickel Wristl



4. Lovestruck



5. Men's Cardholder



7. iPad 2 Bluetooth Keyboa



6. Burberry Laverne Trench



8. Jawbone Bluetooth Jamb



9. Skincare Travel Pack



10. Aliveness Project







Justin Jones

For Anyone: **1. The Insomnia Journal**

Item: "I Can't Sleep: A Journal" by Knock Knock  
Find it at: **The Afternoon, Mall of America**  
Price: \$16.95. A record of what keeps you up at night for remarkable introspection. Quotes to boot.

For Anyone: **2. The Book of Questions**

Item: "The Book of Questions" by Gregory Stock, Ph.D.  
Find it at: **Amazon.com**  
Price: \$6.95. Some of the hardest "what if" questions in the world, packaged for \$7. A book about meeting yourself.

For Her: **3. Michael Kors Nickel Wristlet**

Item: Michael Kors Jet Set Monogram Wristlet  
Find it at: **Michael Kors, Mall of America**  
Price: \$98.00. The chicest wristlet in town, from one of MOA's newest additions. High-gloss metallic. Not for the understated.

For Her: **4. Lovestruck by Vera Wang**

Item: Lovestruck by Vera Wang  
Find it at: **Sephora**  
Price: \$68 1.7oz. From the darling of celebrity weddings comes an enchanting new scent fit for any seductress. A "sparkling floral ... an addictive crush."

For Him: **5. Swarovski Nightfall Men's Cardholder**

Item: Swarovski Nightfall Men's Cardholder  
Find it at: **Swarovski**  
Price: \$115. At once gorgeous AND masculine, this slice of leather artwork bears Swarovski's emblematic crystal squares. Perfect for the stylish sophisticate.

For Him: **6. Burberry Laverne Trench**

Item: Dark Air Force Gray Burberry Laverne Trench  
Find it at: **Burberry**  
Price: \$1,695. The must-have splurge of the season. Made of 10% metal. An edgy showpiece with utility, this is worth every penny.

For Anyone: **7. iPad 2 Bluetooth Keyboard**

Item: Bluetooth Keyboard for iPad 2  
Find it at: **Brookstone**  
Price: \$99.99  
For anyone who's keeping up with the Joneses, a must-have accessory to make the iPad experience even more convenient.

For Anyone: **8. Jawbone Bluetooth Jambox**

Item: Jawbone Jambox (Black Diamond)  
Find it at: **Best Buy**  
Price: \$199.99. Use your phone to wirelessly control your music library through this modern beauty. Super user-friendly. Cool beyond belief. A can't miss this season.

For Him: **9. Jack Black Skincare Travel Pack**

Item: Jack Black On-the-Road Travel Pack (skincare)  
Find it at: **Nordstrom**  
Price: \$59. A starter kit/travel pack from the trendiest skincare line for men. Includes 6 essentials for looking good and smelling delicious.

For Them: **10. A Contribution to the Aliveness Project**

Item: Charitable donation to the Aliveness Project  
Find it at: <http://www.aliveness.org/>  
Price: I recommend a \$100-\$250+ holiday donation  
Make it a practice every year to remember those who aren't as fortunate. The Aliveness Project is my choice this year.



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[www.StyleByMax.com](http://www.StyleByMax.com)

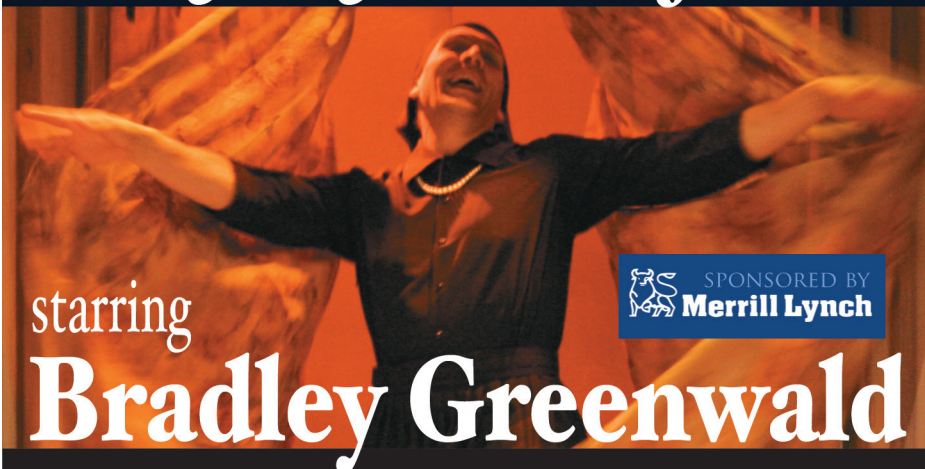


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starring

**Bradley Greenwald**

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**JUNGLETHEATER.com**



# Wanda Wisdom's Gift GUIDE

## 1. Drew's Homemade Caramel Corn



Wanda Wisdom

Need help finding a lil holiday something for the homo who has everything? Let our resident podcasting drag queen and gift-giving guru help you stuff those stockings!

**1. Drew's Homemade Caramel Corn** You haven't really lived until you've nibbled (inhaled) Drew's Homemade Caramel Corn. Made from scratch using a special recipe handed down from the owner's grandpa, this caramel corn is simply addictive. Like twelve step addictive. Go ahead and send a couple bags to your friends, a couple to your family, but don't forget to send a couple to yourself. **Price:** \$5.00 online at [DrewsCaramelCorn.com](http://DrewsCaramelCorn.com) or pick up a few bags at Lunds & Byerly's!

**2. two birds boutique's** Two Birds is two sisters who've made a name for themselves offering unique vintage and contemporary fashion and furnishing finds at unbelievably budget-savvy prices. Their unique boutiques take shape at real world pop-up shops and online. Tasked with helping you create unforgettable looks at equally unforgettable prices, Two Birds believes in dressing fearlessly and wearing what you love. [Etsy.com/people/twobirdsboutique](http://Etsy.com/people/twobirdsboutique)

**3. Heart Hebrides' Scottish Toffee** Thanks to Lavender's own lovely Linda the traffic coordinator, I have found the world's most delicious treat perfect for Valentine's Day gift giving. If ever the nectar of the god's was turned into candy, I'm pretty sure it would taste just like Scottish tablet. Think toffee times a bajillion. Heart Hebrides of Scotland makes quite possible the most sinfully delicious toffee you're ever likely to taste. And for a few pounds (both of the wallet and waistsize variety) you're likely to. **Price:** £12.50 via [hebrideantoffeecompany.com](http://hebrideantoffeecompany.com)

**4. Upstairs, Downstairs** There is no better British period drama than the penultimate classic, *Upstairs, Downstairs*. And with 25 plus hours of new bonus material, there is no better, penultimate box set this holiday season than the brand new 40th anniversary collection of *Upstairs, Downstairs* from Acorn Media. This is at the top of my wishlist and I can only hope some saintly Santa will send me this seductive set! **Price:** \$160 via [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

**5. Ranger Panties** I'm still on a personal crusade to bring back short-shorts for men. And I will keep including them in my gift guide until my work is done. If you have a man on your list whose legs need to be seen, buy him Ranger panties. Yes, Ranger panties. Worn by US Army Rangers, these sassy little skivvies are perfect for running, jogging, or otherwise hanging out. Well, you know what I mean. **Price:** \$8.99 via [Soffe.com](http://Soffe.com)



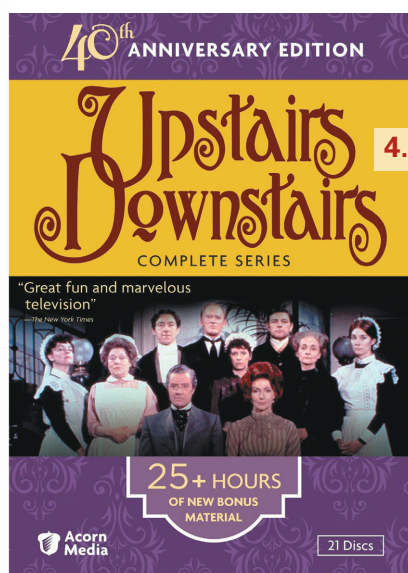
2. two birds boutique's



## 3. Heart Hebrides' Scottish Toffee



## 4. Upstairs, Downstairs



## 5. Ranger Panties





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# Gift GUIDE

## 1. No Boys Allowed



## 2. Custom Chocolate



## 3. Cocktail Architecture



## 4. Herbs De Provence



## 5. Adorning Ornaments



by E.B. Boatner

### 1. No Boys Allowed

Allergic to boys? Add these punchy dishtowels and tissues to your kitchen and purse.  
Napkins \$5.25,  
Towels \$9.95,  
Available [www.jillseale.com](http://www.jillseale.com) or the gift area at Surdyk's, [www.surdyks.com](http://www.surdyks.com).

### 2. Custom Chocolate Gift Baskets

Chocolate gift basket assortment -- caramels, bar, nuts -- something for everyone!  
\$95 for this basket, but Max's can make one to your specifications for any price.  
Max's  
Shops at Excelsior  
3826 Grand Way, St. Louis Park  
[www.stylebymax.com](http://www.stylebymax.com)

### 3. Cocktail Architecture

Cheeky designs with an architectural bent.  
Napkins \$5.25,  
Ceramic divided condiment server \$27  
Available [www.jillseale.com](http://www.jillseale.com) or the gift area at Surdyk's, [www.surdyks.com](http://www.surdyks.com).

### 4. Herbs De Provence Gift Bucket

Shown here: "Lavender." All include Liquid Soap, 10oz bar soap and a 30 x 3- flour sack towel.  
\$29.99  
Marketplace 270 by Linders  
270 Larpeur Avenue, St. Paul  
[www.linders.com](http://www.linders.com)  
Holiday locations at Southdale and Ridgedale Malls.

### 5. Adorning Ornaments

Colorful, hand-blown glass ornaments from E.B. Glassworks.  
\$33  
Max's  
Shops at Excelsior  
3826 Grand Way, St. Louis Park  
[www.stylebymax.com](http://www.stylebymax.com)



# Gift GUIDE



1. Wooden Wonderland



2. Gardening Warning



3. 18-Year Aged Balsamic Vinegar



4. Barbecue Set

by E.B. Boatner

## 1. Wooden Wonderland

Everything offered is handcrafted by American artists and craftspeople, including the fabulous assortment of one-of-a-kind gifts for the holidays. Hand carved and painted wooden decorations made by a retired pastor and his wife from Wisconsin.

Waving Santa \$85

Santa with tree \$45

Wooden pine trees \$15 each

Santa head ornament \$25

The Grand Hand Gallery

619 Grand Ave, St. Paul

[www.thegrandhand.com](http://www.thegrandhand.com)

## 2. Gardening Warning

Earth Sun Moon Trading Company Nature Inspired Apparel, variety of sayings on T-shirts.

\$16.99

Marketplace 270 by Linders

270 Larpenteur Avenue, St. Paul

[www.linders.com](http://www.linders.com)

Holiday locations at Southdale and Ridgedale Malls.

## 3. 18-Year Aged Balsamic Vinegar

A best seller! Traditional Aged 18-year Balsamic Vinegar: Drizzle on aged cheese, fruits and ice cream. Fantastic marinade with olive oil or on salads and greens.

200ml \$12

375ml \$18

One bottle Gift Bag \$6

Also pictured: Gift Basket \$50

Gourmet Oil & Vinegar

The Shops at Grand & Excelsior

3840 Grand Way, St. Louis Park

[www.gourmetoilandvinegar.com](http://www.gourmetoilandvinegar.com)

## 4. Laura Ashley 7-Piece Barbecue Set

One among many Laura Ashley items--garden tools, gardening boots, etc.--available at Linder's.

\$99

Marketplace 270 by Linders

270 Larpenteur Avenue, St. Paul

[www.linders.com](http://www.linders.com)

Holiday locations at Southdale and Ridgedale Malls.



# Gift GUIDE



1. Artful Grooming



2. Gifts for Guys and Bois



3. Frost River Valise



4. Stephen Vincent Rings

by E.B. Boatner

## 1. Artful Grooming

Black palm wood and chrome shaving set with water-resistant finish and stand by local woodturner Mary Lacer.

\$219

The Grand Hand Gallery  
619 Grand Ave, St. Paul

[www.thegrandhand.com](http://www.thegrandhand.com)

## 2. Gifts for Guys and Bois

Give a gift that's as unique as he is.

Card case by Lodis \$25

Tri-fold billfold by Lodis \$50

Black and white fancy scarf \$58

Metal shoehorn by Umbra \$38

The Ultimate Umbrella by Daver \$98

Black textured glove \$128

J. Novachis

3930 W. 50th Street, Edina

[www.jnovachis.com](http://www.jnovachis.com)

## 3. Frost River Valise

Overland Weekender and a variety of other smart bags and prices. Sturdy leather handles with a leather grip. Outside dust flaps buckle down to protect top zipper. Large open pocket outside and a zippered pocket inside. Leather bottom. Adjustable 48" web shoulder strap included. Weekender 13"x 19"x 8" or Carryon (meets maximum airline size requirements). Made in Duluth.

\$239

Marketplace 270 by Linders

270 Larpenteur Avenue, St. Paul

[www.linders.com](http://www.linders.com)

Holiday locations at Southdale and Ridgedale Malls.

## 4. Five Gold Rings (they're not all gold)

Handcrafted jewelry by Minneapolis jeweler Stephen Vincent. Stephen is known for his work with steel and Damascus steel in combination with various types of gold, diamonds and semi-precious stones.

Rings Shown: \$530 - \$1,347

The Grand Hand Gallery

619 Grand Ave, St. Paul

[www.thegrandhand.com](http://www.thegrandhand.com)



# Gift GUIDE



1. NYE 1927



2. Tree of Life



3. Rebel Ink Baby Love



4. Pop-Up Art



5. Craft-o-Rama Craze



Andy Lien

## 1. What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?

Whatever you're doing, I hope you're wearing this... or you've gifted it to Her to don. J. Peterman's 1927 Party Dress (No. 2924). Sleeveless, scoop-neck black silk georgette with over 100,000 hand-strung baguette beads in seven tiers, plus an eighth tier across scooped back. String some jewels, go out dancing. Kiss at midnight.

\$598

[www.jpeterman.com](http://www.jpeterman.com)

## 2. Tree of Life Illumination Sculpture

Beautiful, subtle design with a striking display. While it may not be a Menorah for the Festival of Lights, this is a gift that will illuminate your life every day of the year.

Hand-wrought steel, limited availability.

\$118

[www.shadowofdavid.com](http://www.shadowofdavid.com)

## 3. Baby Love

Yeah, so these have been around for years, but I'd feel remiss if I didn't mention them in my first Gift Guide. You've got a big heart for the gay uncle and love for the moms. If you're not in the area, you can order them directly from Rebel Baby Ink in St. Paul or check the website for various locations in the Twin Cities where you can nab them for the bairn in your life.

\$20-24

[www.rebelinkbaby.com](http://www.rebelinkbaby.com)

## 4. Pop-up Art by Robert Sabuda

Paper art and pop-up storybooks. Add Christmas, Chanukkah, or children's stories and stir. Robert Sabuda, sometimes in collaboration with his partner Matthew Reinhart, has an impressive list of even more impressive works of art for you to add to your book collection or give to a child for theirs. Our family lets the kids handle them carefully, but they're mostly for the adults to visually savor. Okay, they're for my mother to fawn over. But she shares well. Various books and holiday cards at a variety of prices.

[www.robertsabuda.com](http://www.robertsabuda.com)

## 5. Anything at No Coast Craft-o-Rama

Did you know there's a Crafters Local 612 in Minneapolis? Sure. And, since we're a landlocked state, they've cleverly named their annual event the No Coast Craft-o-Rama. Held Friday, December 2 (3 to 8), and Saturday, December 3 (9 to 5), at the Midtown Global Exchange building in Minneapolis, the Craft-o-Rama promises gorgeous and irreverent handmade goods that will pique your interest and tickle your fancy.

Prints, ceramics, jewelry, t-shirts, bags, retro, art, and all-things-cheeky. Be there.

[www.nocoastcraft.com](http://www.nocoastcraft.com)



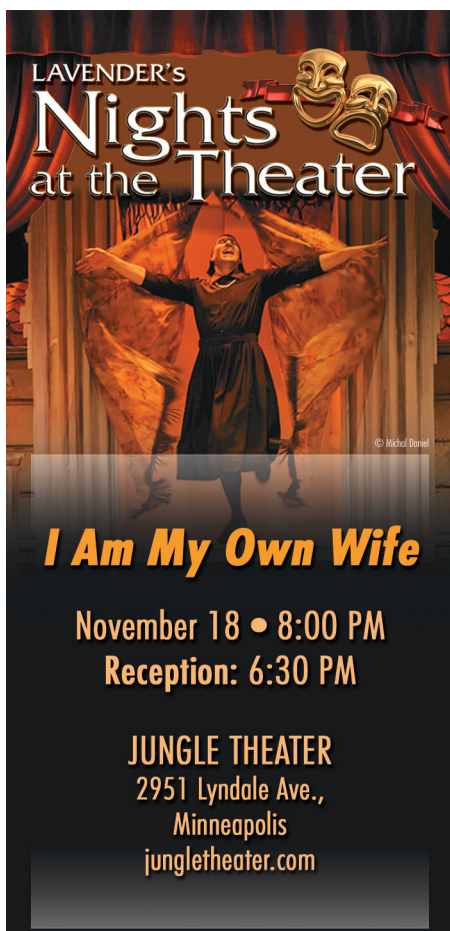


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**I Am My Own Wife**

November 18 • 8:00 PM  
Reception: 6:30 PM

**JUNGLE THEATER**  
2951 Lyndale Ave.,  
Minneapolis  
jungletheater.com

## Gift GUIDE

### The Gifted Gardener

For whatever reason, our actions in December often involve the act of giving. In theory, this is wonderful. Give more. Share the wealth. Treat loved ones with something special. This is supposed to leave us, the givers, with a plethora of warm fuzzy feelings and positive energy as payment for our good deeds. Unfortunately, the act of giving is foreshadowed with feelings of anxiety, procrastination, and eventual panic when we cannot find the perfect "this" or "that" for the characters on our list. Is there a way to take out the stress in what is supposed to be fun? Probably not entirely, but maybe these gift ideas for the gardener (and those that love gardeners) might help you start enjoying the process of giving once again.







Scott Endres

**1. Garden Center Gift Certificate** - For the plant enthusiasts on your list you cannot go wrong with a gift certificate to a favorite garden store. These tokens of love take the guesswork out of giving and show off your exquisite taste. Price: any amount

**2. Quality Garden Gloves** - A pair of quality Womanswork, Pallina, or Tangletown Gardens' Good Grip Gloves, albeit practical, will be much appreciated for the green thumb on your list. Price: \$8.99 - \$30

**3. Felco 2 with Holster** - Investing in a good pruning shear is like investing in a good kitchen knife and Felco makes the ultimate best. If cared for properly, this gift will last a lifetime. Felco makes various styles to suit just about every gardener's needs-- including ergonomically correct styles like the Felco 7, models suitable for lefties--the Felco 9, and the

Felco 6 which is perfect for those with small hands. I prefer the versatile Felco 2. Thanks to the holster which attaches to my belt, it becomes less likely to be lost while working in the garden. Price: Pruner- \$59.99 - \$89.99, Leather Holster - \$14.99

**4. Good Quality Trowel** - With the amount of gardening I do, I can no longer fathom the idea of working with flimsy tools. Believe me, I've had to learn the hard way-- going through dozens of cheap plastic and aluminum trowels that eventually broke or bent when asked to perform even the simplest planting project. Eventually I wised up and took home this heavy duty solid oak and stainless steel model which has been a mainstay in my tool collection and likely to be with me the rest of my days. Price: \$29

**5. Seed Packets** - Put a jump start on spring by giving a bundle of spring garden seed packets. I especially love Seed Savers Exchange-- a reputable line of unusual varieties, including many heirlooms. Price: \$2.75/ packet

**6. Garden Books** - Inspiring garden books helps ease the transition from season to season for all gardeners. Too many favorite titles to list, books are one of many tools that feed the gardener inspiration during the long Minnesota winter. Price: \$6 - \$69

**7. Flowering Plants and Bulbs** - For those who appreciate beauty, a gift of a potted plant, an amaryllis bulb or a handful of paperwhite bulbs are always well received.

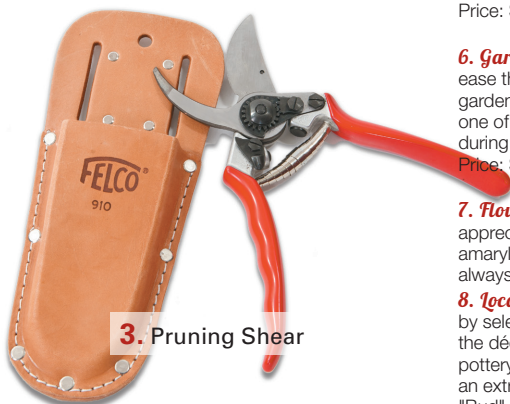
**8. Local Pottery** - Make the gift even more special by selecting an appropriate vessel to complement the décor of the recipient's home. Handmade local pottery and glass containers from local artisans add an extra personal flair. Pottery Shown by Thomas "Bud" Skupniewitz: \$22 each

**9. Locally Made Wren Houses** - Local craftsman John Post creates each unique not-so-big dwelling with love and care with exotic woods, copper roofs, and lots of detail. Perfect for wrens, but also perfect for the gardener who has everything. Price: \$109

**10. Beautiful wreaths or fresh seasonal arrangements** help celebrate the season or thank the perfect host for a great party. Embellish your own wreath or have one custom made by a design oriented garden center to express your style. One does not have to be a gardener to appreciate these gifts of natural beauty. Price: varies

Pay it forward - December is also time to think about giving a bit back to our community. We all know someone who has everything already? Do they really need (or want) anything else? Donate a gift in their name to your favorite cause or other worthwhile charities. Price: whatever you can give. Enjoy the process. Gift giving should also be an expression of you. Shop at the places that you love and those that bring inspiration to your life. This will begin the process and will allow you a refuge from what might otherwise be a chaotic nightmare of malls, parking lots, and disgruntled members of the human race. Surround yourself with the people you love and have fun.

Scott Endres is co-owner of Tangletown Gardens and Tangletown's Wise Acre Eatery on 54th and Nicollet in South Minneapolis.



3. Pruning Shear



5. Seed Packets



10. Wreaths

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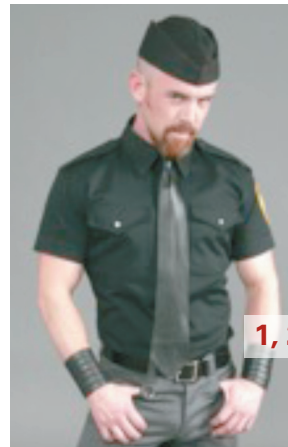
Over the past 9 years, we've won many "best breakfast/brunch" awards from various groups, but there simply aren't enough words to tell you how excited we are about the kudos you gave us in the last issue of Lavender.

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## Gift GUIDE



1, 2. Flight Cap & Shirt



3. Rainbow (C)



4. 2012 Men-ups Calendar



6. Bear Hat



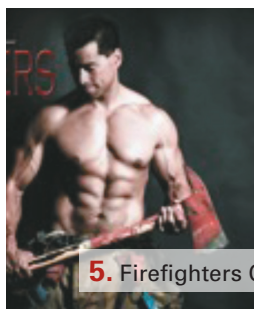
9. The Strut Ring







How Cuffs



5. Firefighters Calendar



7. Liquide Latex Kit



8. Candy Posing Strap



10. Lenius's Book



Steve Lenius

**1. Uniform Flight Cap.** Black cotton twill + red stitching = one sharp-looking hat. Fully lined. Also available in gray. Handmade in USA. \$28.50 at [inseamclothing.com](http://inseamclothing.com) (until 12/14/2011, use code "lavender" for free shipping)

**2. Engineered Uniform Shirt.** Uniform-inspired design. Slightly fitted shape for a classically masculine and powerful look. Cotton twill with natural stretch. Handmade in USA. \$72 at [inseamclothing.com](http://inseamclothing.com) (until 12/14/2011, use code "lavender" for free shipping)

**3. Metallic-finish Rainbow Cuffs.** Nor your average cuffs, these are embellished with rainbow-metallic stripes and adorned with faux jewels. Bling for your dungeon. \$50 at The Smitten Kitten

**4. 2012 Men-ups Calendar.** Butch guys photographed in poses normally reserved for mid-century cheesecake babes. Equal parts art, social commentary and deliciously twisted hotness. \$15 at [rionsabean.com](http://rionsabean.com)

**5. 2012 St. Paul Firefighters Calendar.** The perfect calendar for those who appreciate uniforms, gear and smoking-hot men. (Proceeds benefit The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.) \$15 at Rainbow Road

**6. Bear Hat.** Is he a proud bear? Keep his head cozy and warm while dressing the part. Available in brown bear, polar bear or panda bear. \$52.28 at Cockpit Minneapolis

**7. Liquid Latex Kit.** Gives new meaning to the phrase "painted-on jeans." Everything needed to get creative and discover the fun of liquid latex. \$54 at Cockpit Minneapolis

**8. Candy Posing Strap.** Imagine the possibilities of this sugary adult treat. Also available as a candy bikini and candy garter. \$9.95 at Rainbow Road

**9. The Strut Ring by Gear Essentials**  
Jewelry for his jewels that's functional, too. Premium stainless steel, made right here in Minnesota. Many other styles available. \$37 at GearEssentials.com

**10. Life, Leather and the Pursuit of Happiness.**  
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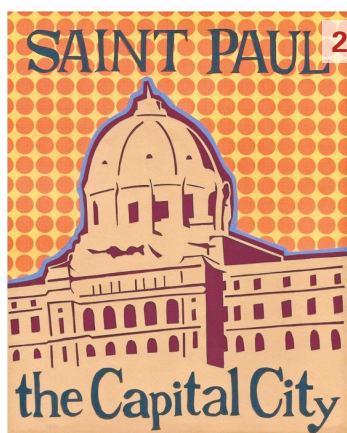
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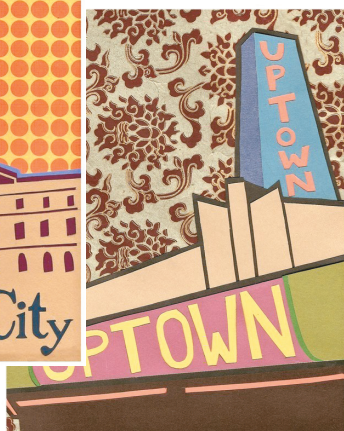
# Gift GUIDE



1. Golden Fig



2. Linden Leaf Prints



3. Serious Jam



4. Prairie Vodka



5. Bittercube Bitters



Joy Summers

**1. Golden Fig gift box** - The Golden Fig is a treasure for local food lovers. With a constantly revolving product list, the shelves are lined with food treasures made locally. (They are also quick with the samples of products and full of impassioned soliloquies about the beauty of the items they carry.) The staff will put together personally selected gift boxes, tucked into a repurposed cigar box and can work within a budget. The perfect gift for someone out of town who would like a little taste of the Minne- or your favorite local foodie.

**2. Linden Leaf Prints on Etsy** - Brightly colored, Helen Schroeder's prints celebrate Minnesota with her whimsical prints. I'm hoping to snag one of the Saint Paul prints for this holiday season. A bright whitecapitol building set against orange polka dots celebrates the saintly city that I married into. I love the 8 x 10 size, priced at 18, but many of the prints are available in smaller sizes, framed and unframed for even less.

**3. Serious Jams by Heidi Skoog** - Skoog is a florist by day, but in her spare time she's been mixing up someserious jams, both in name and intensity. The first time I tasted her products I was enamored with the flavor profiles. Strawberry, rhubarb and Pimms - Pimms!? Is that not genius? Right now I'm spooning my way through a jar of blueberry, sage and bourbon and already I'm dreading the ever approaching glassbottom. Because her jams are small batch they are precious and available in limited amounts. Available online only here: <http://goodsie.com/store/serious-jam>

**4. Prairie Vodka** - What better way to mark the holidays than with booze? Vodka is incredibly versatile spirit, and Prairie vodka's crisp, clean flavor is the best a mixer could ask for. From holiday brunch screwdrivers to an evening nightcap (with a bit of citrus and a drop of bitters) any occasion is better when there's toasting involved.

**5. Bittercube Bitters full set** - Each batch of these bitters are handcrafted by Nick Kosevich, formerly of Town Talk and partner Ira Kolopwitz. Each is layered with sweet, spiced and bitter flavors. Not only do they elevate an ordinary cocktail to elegant, but these are also a great tool to add to any bakers cooking arsenal. Try using the Bolivar bitters in place of vanilla in recipes. Available at many area liquor stores and online at <http://bittercube.com>



**6. Kitchen in the Market** - Cooking classes with a friend. During the holidays, it's especially difficult to get in time with all of those you care about. I'm thinking epic car trips back and forth braving blizzards and black ice to family, while your near and dear city friends are off gallivanting somewhere fabulous. I'm always happiest in the kitchen, surrounded by friends, that's why the gift of a cooking class with a friend would be the best kind of present. Time and fun spent in a gorgeous kitchen space. Classes run the gamut from stuff for hardcore foodies to novices in the kitchen. Time, that's a precious gift.

**7. Frogtown Pottery** - The Yeriches are the sort of super arty, smart people that you want to add to your dinner party list. Smart, kind and funny, they also have these beautifully crafted serving pieces. The ragged smooth earthen edges glazed in rich colors reminiscent of red clay mud banks, or limestone caverns. Each piece a work of art, representative of the landscape we call home. Pieces are currently available at Tangletown Gardens. For more information, see them on the web, here. <http://www.roguepotters.com/artists/fred-yerich-frogtown-pottery/>

**8. I am MN Nice** - Ryan Ott has been traveling around the metro and surrounding areas making videos of main street businesses, giving voice to the hardworking craftsman, musicians, tastemakers and more. Is it any wonder this is something that appeals to me? In addition to the cool videos posted on his site, they also sell these cozy I Am MN Nice sweatshirts. A great way to stay warm, support a local business supporter and show a little state pride. <http://www.iammnnice.com/i-am-mn-nice-shop/adult-hoodie>

**9. I Like You** - A sweet little boutique located in Minneapolis, this store features entirely locally made stuff. From kitchen utensils, to prints, to handmade jewelry and some of the greatest cards around, they've collected all sorts of adorable gift items. I love to go in with no agenda, and come out with armloads of perfect gifts for everyone on my list. <http://www.ilikeyouonline.com/>



6. Kitchen in the Market



7. Frogtown Pottery



8. I am MN Nice



9. I Like You



# Gift GUIDE

When my editor suggested that I write an article tailored to our gift guide issue, I was somewhat reluctant. I love giving gifts, but shopping for them is always stressful, and this year presents its own set of challenges. Gift-giving in 2011 isn't just about acquiring more stuff: it's about spending time together in a meaningful way. But I gave it some thought, and realized that I can't think of a better, more appropriate way to accomplish that than through food itself. Therefore, to make this year's shopping a little easier for all of my *Lavender* foodies out there, I thought I'd let you in on a few of my favorite gift ideas for 2011, categorized by personality type.



Heidi Fellner

## *The Adventurer*

The adventurer appreciates any opportunity to try something new and different. **Kitchen in the Market** ([kitcheninthemarket.com](http://kitcheninthemarket.com)) offers an array of classes that are all about having a blast while making new friends and expanding your cooking repertoire. Their most popular class, Cooking in the Market, helps attendees create a full meal with wine and beer, plus a champagne aperitif to start. Classes range from \$45-70, and some are designed specifically with the GLBT community in mind. Kitchen in the Market is located at 920 E. Lake Street #107, within Midtown Global Market in Minneapolis.

## *The Pragmatist*

Pragmatists have busy lives, so a spa gift card might sit there collecting dust. However, even the busiest people still need lunch during the work week, and lately, many of us have been brown-bagging it to save a few bucks. A gift certificate to one of the best sandwich shops in town, **Bewitched** ([bewitcheddeli.com](http://bewitcheddeli.com)), makes the perfect gift. An online menu (including such wonders as the Tuna Confit on focaccia, with black olive, cucumber & preserved lemon) and a new delivery service makes it easy for the lucky recipient to be the envy of their workplace for days. Just pick up your certificate at Bewitched, at 800 Washington Ave. N in Minneapolis. Best of all, with sandwiches ranging from \$6.50 up, your gift will go a long way towards making someone's daily life a little bit better.

## *The Gourmet*

The gourmet loves to entertain, and the secret to quick, yet impressive home cooking is a show-stopping gourmet olive oil or aged balsamic vinegar. **Vinaigrette** ([vinaigrettemn.com](http://vinaigrettemn.com)) imports olive oils and vinegars from all over the world, and creates exquisite, customized gift baskets that can be wrapped and placed under the tree, or shipped across the country. To select your gourmet's gift, swing by 5006 Xerxes Avenue South in Edina, or shop online. Gift certificates are also available in store, and very shortly will be available for purchase on the web.

## *The Inner Child*

The inner child type adores the holidays, and when they unwrap a gift, they want something magical and exciting. In my opinion, no other establishment in the Twin Cities area captures this sentiment more than the **Blue Door Pub**, which offers such Ramona Quimby-esque novelties as a burger with peanut butter, or a Hawaiian burger topped with pineapple slices, Canadian bacon, and sweet chili lime sauce. It's a little strange and a lot fantastic, like Disneyland for your mouth. Gift certificates are available at the restaurant, at 1811 Selby Ave. in St. Paul. ➔



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### ***The Classicist***

For a no-fail gift, treat the classicist to a night at **Meritage** or the **St. Paul Grill**. Both restaurants offer truly memorable food and excellent service, and are conveniently located near the Ordway and several other attractions in downtown St. Paul. ([st.paulgrill.com](http://st.paulgrill.com), [meritage-stpaul.com](http://meritage-stpaul.com)) The St. Paul Grill makes gift-certificate purchasing exceptionally easy online, with denominations ranging from \$25 to \$200.

### ***The Hedonist***

Pleasure-seekers flock to **The Strip Club** in St. Paul to take part in the rapture of meat and fish, a from-scratch kitchen and bar, funky neo-Victorian decor, and a menu that quite frankly reads like a 1970s romance novel. The Strip Club manages to be unpretentious enough to offer deviled eggs as an appetizer, and foodie-friendly enough to compel you to order them again and again. The crowd is varied, raucous, and not shy about expressing the occasional "Ooh" and "Ah" that grass-fed beef can inspire. Furthermore, the views of downtown St. Paul are spectacular from the restaurant's location at 378 Maria Avenue. Gift certificates are available at the restaurant.

---

I realize this list is heavy on gift-certificates, which in other circumstances are often looked down upon. But I feel that treating someone to good food is an exception to the gift-certificate doldrums, and calamari doesn't wrap all that well anyway.

And if any of the above strikes your fancy, all you have to do is leave this magazine lying around some place conspicuous, and open to the appropriate page. If you have to, go ahead and scotch tape it down just to make sure your point is made. Happy Holidays to you all. ◻





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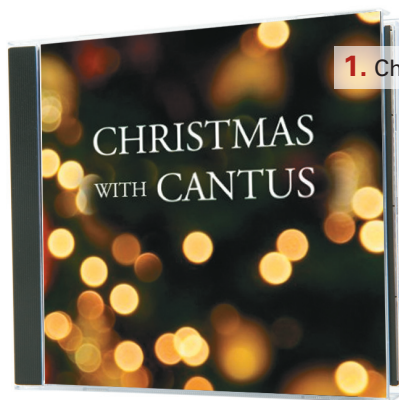
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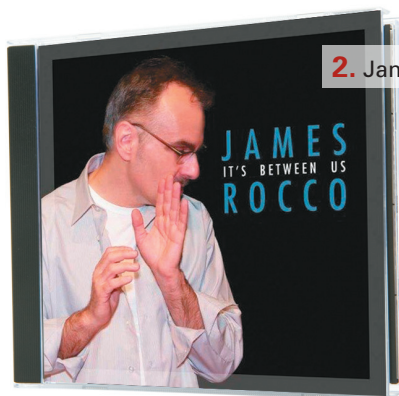
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# Gift GUIDE



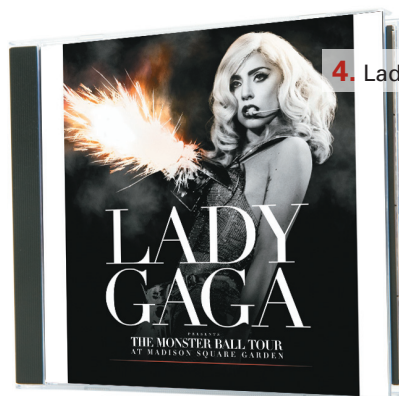
1. Christmas with Cantus



2. James Rocco



3. Cyndi Lauper



4. Lady Gaga



5. Pink Floyd



Ed Huyck

**1. Christmas with Cantus** - If you are looking for a fresh take on holiday music, you don't have to go any further than this new set by one of the Twin Cities top vocal ensembles. The group's signature mixing of different influences across time and the globe are in full effect through this 16-piece set, moving easily from the 15th-century "Coventry Carol" to the far-more modern "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas." Throughout, you'll hear the exquisite vocal work by the nine-member ensemble. Pair this with Cantus' 2006 recording of *All is Calm*: the 1914 Christmas Truce for added enjoyment.

**2. James Rocco's *Between Us*** - While best known in the Twin Cities for being the producing director of the Ordway Center in St. Paul, James Rocco had an earlier career, where – recording as Jamie Alexander – was a teen star, making well-received albums, playing Carnegie Hall and performing in *Cats* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*. After a long break away from singing, Rocco has returned with a new solo album, featuring compositions by Jackson Browne, Lucinda Williams and Jimmy Webb. Musically, Rocco is joined by co-producer Raymond Berg and a small combo that only highlight his longstanding (and dormant) vocal gifts.

**3. Cyndi Lauper *To Memphis With Love* DVD** The 1980s don't ever seem to go out of style, and Lauper's contributions certainly have helped to keep the neon flash of the decade in everyone's minds. Her new DVD puts the current version of Lauper on the screen for all to see, with a 15-song set made up of famous classics (ending, as you would expect, with "Girls Just Want to Have Fun") and current tunes. In this gig recorded last December, Lauper uses an ace backup group, led by the legendary Allen Toussaint and featuring other notables, such as North Dakota's favorite native guitarist, Jonny Lang.

**4. Lady Gaga Presents *The Monster Ball Tour*** at Madison Square Garden If you missed Gaga's recent local performance or this show's original HBO broadcast – or just want relive the gaudy memories – the film of her *Monster Ball* tour is now available for all to enjoy whenever they feel the need. The in-concert footage is drawn from a pair of concerts in New York City in February of this year. Gaga's choreographer Laurieann Gibson handles the directing duties, with performances of 20 tunes drawn from the hit singer's multiple albums. The DVD will also include footage and bonus material not included in the original and, if you want to see Lady Gaga in the sharpest form possible, also be available on Blu-ray.

**5. Pink Floyd box sets** - While the British prog rockers have been on the sidelines for nearly 20 years now, their legendary recordings from the 1960s and 1970s continues to inspire new generations of fans. The latest incarnation? A series of "immersion" box sets for the likes of *Dark Side of the Moon*, *The Wall* and *Wish You Were Here* are now available. The massive packages include newly remastered and remixed versions of the original album along with multiple discs of other goodies – early, live version of *Wish You Were Here* cuts, early mixes of *Dark Side of the Moon*, and demo and live versions of *The Wall*. All of them also feature artwork, books and other collectables for fans to devour.



# Gift GUIDE



1. Tee and Gift Card



3. Blake Table Lamp



4. Apple iPad



6. Year Membership

## THE LOFT LITERARY CENTER



5. 141 Eyewear



7. Vita Comp Bike



8. Car Wash



9. Pearl Bracelet



10. One Button Blazer



Ellen Krug

### 1. Tee and Gift Card from the Smitten Kitten

Lyndale Ave. S. Minneapolis. If I can't have the woman wearing the tee, I guess I'll settle for the shirt. Christmas from the Kitten! Always prrrrfect for any girl. **Price:** \$15 plus \$200 gift card (hey, quality costs!)

**2. Beirut's Album *The Riptide*** - This is a killer album with standout vocals and rock'n lyrics. The "Santa Fe," track is reason alone to jump out of my seat and dance with snapping fingers on both hands. **Price:** \$11.58 via Amazon.com

**3. Blake Table Lamp** - with linen shade from Room&Board, 7010 France Avenue South, Edina. I got only so far with my condo furnishings and then ran out of gas. It's damn difficult to read in the dark, so this to-die-for lamp would be wonderful. **Price:** \$299

**4. Apple iPad** - from the Apple Store, 3018 Hennepin Avenue, Uptown. I'm one of 36 people in America who doesn't own a single thing from Apple. It's time. The iPad seems like a good place to start. **Price:** \$499

**5. 141 Eyewear** - from Look+See, 225 Main Street, S.E., Minneapolis 141 Eyewear donates one pair of glasses for every pair sold. Watch the UTube video on the L+S web site—you'll know why I think this the is coolest eyewear company out there. **Price:** \$\$\$

**6. Year Membership to the Loft Literary Center**, 1011 Washington Ave. S, Minneapolis Perfect for anyone who writes or reads. The Loft is the largest private literary organization in the fricken country. We need to support it. Enough said. **Price:** \$60

**7. Vita Comp** Manufactured by Specialized Bicycles It's time for a new bike, something that doesn't date to 1982. The Vita is the women's version of a great commuter bike with an 8 speed drive train and skinny tires. **Price:** \$1049 at Erik's in Dinkytown—ask for Tyler who knows his stuff.

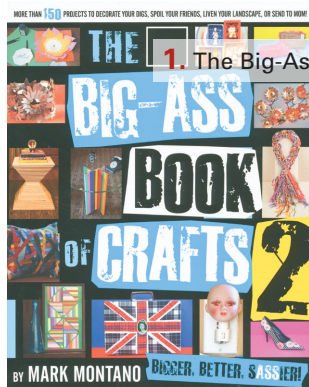
**8. Car Wash and Detailing** from Park and Lake Carwash I'm always thinking the CRV needs a bath. They guys and gals at Park and Lake do a great job. And, they're friendly! Now, tip them already. **Price:** \$149

**9. Pearl Beaded Bracelet** from Patina, 1009 W. Franklin Ave, Minneapolis. This little baby would look great on my right wrist. Did I say that I love funky, cool jewelry? Well there, I just said it. **Price:** \$24

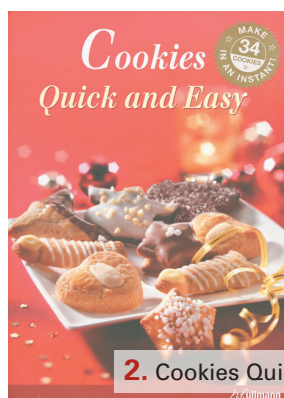
**10. Studio Stretch One Button Blazer** from Express, Rosedale Center Mall I'm always trying to class up my act, and regardless of your age, blazers are always a great pick. Express seems to hit the mark all the time—which is reason why I can't go there very often. My bank account can't take it. **Price:** \$98



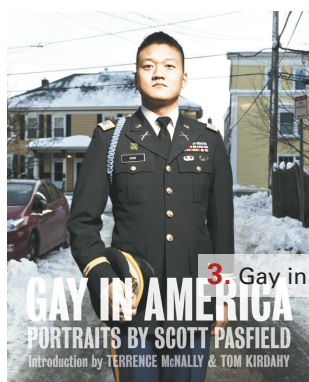
# Gift GUIDE



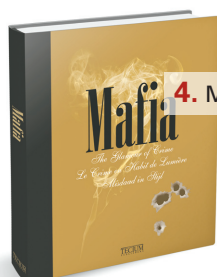
1. The Big-Ass Book of Crafts 2



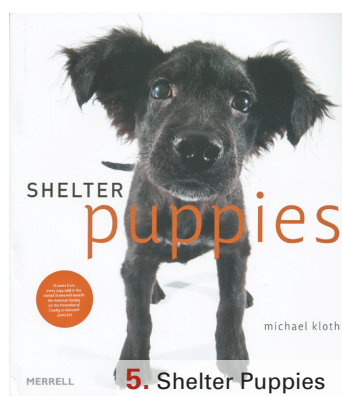
2. Cookies Quick and Easy



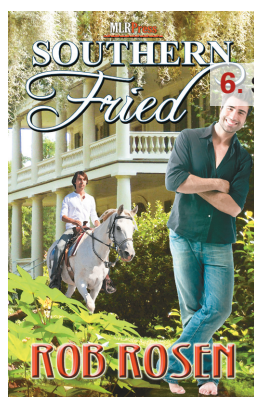
3. Gay in America



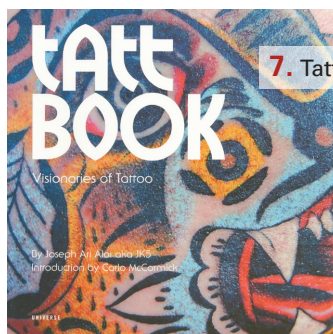
4. Mafia



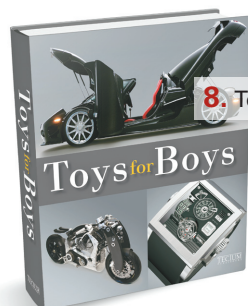
5. Shelter Puppies



6. Southern Fried



7. Tatt Book



8. Toys for Boys Giftbox



9. Wizard of Oz Scanimation



by E.B. Boatner

## 1. *The Big-Ass Book of Crafts 2*

**Mark Montano**

Gallery Books. \$19.99. If it's glittery, gaudy, eye-popping and wasn't in Book 1, it's probably in this compendium of 150+ do-it-yourself craft projects. Doll's head salt and peppers? Money shrine? Plunge in!

## 2. *Cookies Quick and Easy*

**Gisela Muhr**

h.f.ullmann. \$9.99. Thirty recipes (plus 10 classics) for the enclosed, reusable cookie cutter that stamps out 34 simultaneous morsels. Nifty gift for cookie maven and kichen-challenged alike.

## 3. *Gay in America: Portraits by Scott Pasfield*

**Scott Pasfield**

Welcome Books. \$45. Pasfield travelled 52,000 miles through all 50 states (& DC) to record and interview 150 gay men. The result is moving, happy, sad, positive and poignant. A beautiful gift for the holidays.

## 4. *Mafia: The Glamour of Crime*

**Fein Meynendonckx**

Tectum Publishers. \$59.95. A spectacular coffee table tome with touting all things Godfather: Irish, Italian, Jewish, and Mumbai Mafias and, of course, Bogart, Cagney and Edward G. Robinson. Gotta love the cover's (fake?) bullet holes.

## 5. *Shelter Puppies*

**Michael Kloth**

Merrell. \$19.95. A happy book by author of Shelter Cats. Portraits illustrate a fraction of those seeking forever homes, while endnotes reveal adoption outcomes. A portion of USA proceeds will benefit ASPCA®.

## 6. *Southern Fried*

**Rob Rosen**

MLR Press. \$14.99. Deep South, deep sex, fried chicken... What's not to like in Rosen's new romp with hero Trip Jackson and smart assisting characters, blending comedy, convoluted, dysfunctional family twists – and murder.

## 7. *Tatt Book: Visionaries of Tatto*

**Joseph Ari Aloia aka JK5**

Universe. \$29.95. Virtuoso artist JK5 profiles his own work and 21 other outstanding artists worldwide, all on the cutting edge of their craft. The photography is breathtaking and illuminates the range of imagination and work being done today.

## 8. *Toys for Boys Giftbox*

**Patrice Faramah**

Tectum Publishers. \$49.95. In 750 color pictures of over 200 ultimate luxury gifts your very own Hotseat Combat Flight Simulator – the 3D Giftbox offers the book and a gift watch to sport as you turn the pages.

## 9. *Wizard of Oz Scanimation: 10 Classic Scenes from Over the Rainbow*

**Rufus Butler Seder**

Workman Publishing. \$14.95. Oz like you've never seen it before through the magic of Seder's Scanimation® - from the twister to the click of Dorothy's ruby slippers. For all friends of Dorothy. Great stocking stuffer.



# Give the Gift of Books: Keep True Colors Flying

“So – what do I want readers to know about True Colors? That we are OPEN!” said owner Ruta Skujins. “There was so much fuss about Amazon closing, “but relatively little about me buying it and keeping it open. Even after 3 1/2 years, I still talk to people who don’t know we’re open. I sometimes think more women in other parts of the country/world know that True Colors took over Amazon than do people in the Twin Cities.”

Formerly Amazon Bookstore Cooperative, and Amazon Feminist Bookstore before that, True Colors remains the country's oldest continually operating feminist bookstore. "It began," Skujins recounted, "on the front porch of a commune in 1970 as an informal way to distribute books, manifestos, periodicals and other writings of the growing women's movement."

After several locations, including 15 years at Loring Park it moved in 2000 to the new

Chrysalis Center for Women, then a few blocks south to its current location.

Sole owner since 2008, Skujins continues the tradition of “empowering women and girls, of providing products and services that encourage and foster the strength, wisdom, and diversity of women, their families and allies.

"We pack a lot into a small space!" noted Skujins—with over 10,000 titles of new books in stock, and used editions and event space below. She fostered a "completely different atmosphere," explaining, "I'd talked to, and heard about, many men and trans people who never felt welcome in the store. That's changed."

"We're a resource for women coming out," continued Skujions," as well as for newcomers to town. We can direct them to organizations and places where they can meet other women. The trans community is welcome and we try to stock most books in print on transgender.



Schools and churches come to us to obtain LGBT books for their libraries.”

The only queer bookstore left in town, True Colors also offers a large selection of gender studies and transgender subjects, LGBT non-fiction books, and a small gay fiction section, as well as gift and souvenir items—magnets, bumperstickers, buttons, pins and rainbow flags, and lesbian greeting cards.

As an editor at two lesbian publishing houses, judge for the Golden Crown Literary Society, and beta-reader of lesbian fiction, Skujins made many lesbian author friends. "I receive requests from authors around the world to stock their works of lesfic. Authors donate books to the store, and have traveled from as far as Boston and Houston to do book launches here.

"We are becoming known for our spirituality section, and publishers and authors of spiri-

“Your service is a blessing to us families who live in poverty and can’t afford Christmas presents. Our children couldn’t be happier. You put smiles on my children’s faces...priceless.”

– 2010 Gift Basket recipient



## Gift Baskets with The Aliveness Project

Adopting, baking, sewing, delivering – these are just a few of the ways you can give of yourself this holiday season by joining in The Aliveness Project’s 24th Holiday Basket program.

Started in 1988, the event was intended to give a special something to people living with HIV/AIDS—often ostracized by their families and alone on the holidays.

“Like The Aliveness Project itself,” says Tim Marburger, Director of Fundraising and Special Events, the Holiday Basket program began in a very “grassroots” manner. Folks knew their friends were alone or dying; they knew that they needed comfort at the holidays. Someone knew that they had a few clothing items stashed away, while another person had some craft items. These gifts, some food and a Dayton’s Santa Bear were

the beginning of the Holiday Basket program.

“In the first year,” continues Marburger, “we did maybe 50-75 baskets; in 2010, we gave out 710.” The baskets now are delivered out of The Aliveness Project facility. There are two days where Project members can pick up their baskets, and then a day when over 300 baskets are delivered to those who are no longer able to venture out.

As the number of baskets has increased so has the number of volunteers. Last year, over 1,400 volunteers helped out at The Aliveness Project, more than 600 of them involved in the Holiday Basket program, wrapping, baking cookies, adopting, delivering, quilting, holding mitten drives, etc.

"As with our other services," Marburger notes, "we serve everyone from babies to people in their 80s. The baskets represent our

membership—black, white, straight, gay, male, female. A basket is not only for the person(s) living with HIV/AIDS, but also their family.

“When a member applies for a basket he/she completes a ‘wish list’ (clothing sizes, musical/movie tastes, household item needs, etc.), which we give to those who adopt. The adopter then spends about \$35 to purchase something from the wish list. Each basket is unique – one wants a sweater and the new Beyonce CD, another wants a toaster and some house slippers, while a third asks for a broom, gloves and cleaning supplies.”

Emphasizes Marburger, "We have faith communities, school groups, Boy/Girl Scout groups, senior sewing clubs, and hundreds of individuals coming together to make a difference in the lives of those living with HIV/AIDS. We serve the entire state of



tuality books—both mainstream and other—want us to carry their books and host readings. We participate in the Mankato Women's Spirituality Conference, and New Age expos in Hutchinson, Minnetonka and Mankato and other locations. And, finally, our children's section is absolutely awesome. We invest a lot of time to ensure that our selections reflect diversity of race, ethnicity and culture."

As important a place as True Colors holds in the Twin Cities GLBT communities, its business has been affected by the current economic downswing. Online sales, once a major part of the store's revenue, have dropped sharply, although Skujins finds there are "still many women around the country who prefer to order from a feminist/lesbian bookstore."

It's fine to be aware that True Colors is OPEN, but even more important to stop by and buy: "If business doesn't pick up significantly in the next two months," Skujins acknowledged, "we'll be closing when the lease runs out in March. I'm constantly told about how much emotional support there is for the store, but that doesn't pay the bills." □

Minnesota, as about 10% of the baskets are sent throughout Greater Minnesota."

"The kindness, generous and thoughtfulness brought tears of joy to our family, whom otherwise would not have had anything," wrote one recipient, "winter hats, gloves, ear muff and thermals were indeed a necessity!...seeing our child's face when she got her first pair of roller blades cannot be described. It leaves me with tears and restores our faith in humanity!"

Another reported, "The people who brought the basket were so nice. They didn't treat me like they are afraid. So many people have turned their backs on me, but you guys made me feel so much better; not just with the gifts, but with the Christmas spirit."

Concludes Marburger, "The Aliveness Project could not exist without the support of our community – a caring group who knows the struggles of being left out. Thank you for all that you have and will continue to do for those living with and affected by HIV/AIDS in Minnesota." □

Adopting, baking, sewing, delivering... you can help. Visit [www.aliveness.org/share-spirit-season](http://www.aliveness.org/share-spirit-season).

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**The Aliveness Project would like to thank Lavender Readers for Voting Dining Out for Life as the FAB Fundraiser**







## Uganda: An Overview of How White American Evangelicals and Enriched Ugandan Politicians Target Lesbians and Gays

AMERICAN TAXPAYERS have grown increasingly wary and weary of dumping billions of dollars annually into countries that do not honor the separation of religion and state and which provide little sunlight on how much of those billions are spent. Egypt's recently fallen dictator Hosni Mubarak, exorbitantly funded by the US since the Reagan Era, was known for antigay horrors justified by the Koran. Israel chronically disgusts human rights organizations with military and internment policies that are justified by specific interpretations of Jewish history and identity.

Conservative Islamic legacies and rigidity permeate the two countries the US has poured billions into over the past decade under both Bush and Obama administrations. Constitutional protections against women, children, and gays are still lacking in Iraq. In Afghan tribalism still reigns with misogynistic, child-battering, and homophobic iron fists.

Hence, some could hastily conclude that Christian countries have better human rights records than those run by Jews and Muslims. But not so fast.

Perhaps you've heard about the reign of terror suffered by gays and lesbians in Uganda in recent years and simply dismissed it as either hyperbolic or as a typical example of a poor country sliding backward.

However, as is often the case in the Third World, there is a complicit Western component. In this case it goes back to Ronald Reagan's White House, where President Yoweri Museveni was warmly greeted by "the gipper" and began establishing ties with Christian Right millionaires. Museveni has been Uganda's President since 1986. Jeff Sharlet, contributing editor to *Harpers*, has assiduously researched the influential financial, social, and political ties of Christian Right wealth. He says Museveni is known to what he calls The Fellowship as "their key man in Africa." (Sharlet's book *The Family* is a scupulously detailed inside look at The Fellowship's extraordinary financial clout and its network of C Street politicians. Sharlet and Pulitzer Prize-winner Christopher Hedges's years of reportage and analysis for *Harpers* contains some of the sharpest insight on the Christian Right, post-Reagan.)

However, it wasn't until 2003 when the US evangelical/Uganda connection struck its mother lode. Recall then how President George W. Bush shrewdly pulled the rug from under his detractors when he announced that he would send 15 billion dollars from 2003 to 2008 for AIDS funding in the form of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Tens of billions still fund and will be funding PEPFAR.

Two Christian Right figures assisted Bush. (1) His Department of State's Global AIDS co-ordinator, Randall Tobias, pivotal in launching the program, was also known as the "global AIDS czar." He resigned in 2007 after it was revealed he regularly sought services through the suspiciously late D.C. Madam, whose most talked about client was Senator David "Diaper Boy" Vitter (R-LA). However, as a political figure, Tobias was adamantly anti-prostitution and said that condoms had not been effective in thwarting HIV/AIDS. (2) Claude Allen, Bush's chief domestic policy advisor, also active with PEPFAR, resigned in 2006 because of felony theft at a Maryland Target store.

In 2005 California pastor Rick Warren capitalized on PEPFAR's gravy train when he introduced his global AIDS initiative at his Saddleback Mega-church along with Ugandan pastor Martin Ssempe, a close friend of Uganda's "born again" First Lady Janet Museveni. Drama Queen Ssempe publicly burned condoms in Jesus's name, a crude theatric that surely scored him points with Bush's probstinence crowd. He was also named special representative for the First Lady's Task Force on AIDS in Uganda to the tune of a \$40,000 PEPFAR-funded salary. Ssempe and the First Lady's relationship could be compared to Rasputin and Czarina Alexandra.

In 2005 billboards supporting condom use in the capitol, Kampala (Minneapolis's sister city), were replaced with ones supporting abstinence. The following year it was reported to the 16th International AIDS Conference in Toronto that Uganda's AIDS cases number had risen. (The abstinence approach to preventing HIV has been long discredited.) In 2007 Ssempe shifted into full throttle with a Kampala march that peddled

gay marriage fears and called for the arrests of "homos." Ssempe's online campaign to expose known gay people led to the arrest of gay activists by the Museveni administration, whose police forces not only did and have not tracked hate crimes against gays and lesbians, but which is also said to have been involved in torture, beatings, and other rights violations of gays and lesbians. To this day websites promoting gay rights in Uganda are systematically shut down.

When the late Representative Tom Lantos (D-CA) called for reforming PEPFAR in early 2008, Warren and Watergate felon Chuck Colson, now a nationally syndicated Christian radio commentator, held an emergency press conference at the US Capitol. Warren, in a shameless appeal to both neocon Christians and liberal feminists said Lantos's efforts would increase sex trafficking. Hence, Lantos's efforts were quashed and PEPFAR retained its shape.

What's stunningly ironic is that Warren has also been deeply associated with Rwanda's President Paul Kagame, whose army has conscripted children, has been cozy with sex traffickers, and has acted atrociously toward inhabitants of the Congo. Further irony: Warren delivered President Obama's inaugural prayer. Further irony yet: singer/songwriter Melissa Etheridge was highly proactive in cleaning up Warren's image to appease the GLBT community and others in Obama's base.

In March 2009 a Kampala conference dubbed The Gay Agenda, led by three American evangelicals, was held in Kampala. Revisionist historian Scott Lively, Exodus International board member Don Schmierer, and Caleb Lee Brundbrigde, a so-called "ex-gay" who thinks homosexuality can be "cured," were at the helm. This conference is considered to be a dark turning point by launching a frenzy of fear-driven mis- and disinformation. It gave pseudo-scientific justifications that reinforced prevailing ignorant absurdities in Uganda about homosexuality equaling promiscuity, bestiality, pedophilia, drinking of bodily fluids, and something for which youth can be recruited. The recruiting fear has been especially potent.



Seven months later, in mid-October, Member of Parliament (MP) David Bahati introduced the infamous Anti-Homosexuality Bill. It essentially called for the infrastructuring of homophobia into public policy to a degree perhaps unequaled in human history. (Sen. James Inhofe (R-OK), who has made over 100 trips to Africa, more than any Senator in US history, gave Bahati his entre into the American Christian Right's wealthy inner circles.)

The Anti-Homosexuality Bill's tamer aspects, many of which can still be voted on, put forth the concept of the "offense of homosexuality." The definition of that offense includes any act that penetrates or stimulates the genitalia and orifices, including the mouth of someone of the same sex; or touching someone of the same sex with the "intention of committing the act of homosexuality." These could mean incarceration for life. Other attempts to "commit" homosexuality could result in seven years of incarceration.

The death penalty would be executed for what's termed "aggravated homosexuality." Those found guilty would be forced to undergo an HIV test and then be killed by the state. "Aggravated homosexuality" is defined as when an adult has homosexual sex with someone under 18, when the offender has HIV, when the offender is the parent or guardian of or a person of authority over the victim, when the victim has a disability, when the offender does something to "stupefy or overpower" the person he or she is drawn to, or someone who has had previous offenses. Obviously a toxic recipe for he said/he said or she said/she said as well as a chilling effect on medical professionals and human rights agencies who would ordinarily protect privacy rights of patients and victims of state-sanctioned abuse.

When news of this bill reached Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), he swiftly contacted Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and US Trade Representative Ron Kirk asserting that "Uganda's beneficiary status under the AGOA (African Growth and Opportunity Act) will be revoked if the proposed legislation is enacted." Secretary Clinton and President Obama expressed opposition to the bill. Minneapolis's city council passed a resolution opposing the bill.

The week before the bill was introduced, mass hysteria swept Uganda as the Uganda magazine *Rolling Stone*, editor Giles Muhame (not the same as that published in the US) printed the names, addresses, and photos of a hundred known gays and lesbians. Its headline: "Hang Them!" Later that month Muhame exposed yet more identities. Privacy invasion sells. This meant gays and lesbians were even more on the run than ever. They were continued to be denied rental rights. Torture was continued. They continued to be fired from jobs. Sharlet has reported the practice of "corrective" rape superstitiously believed to turn lesbians straight. These evils were punctuated in January of this year when one of Uganda's major gay activists, David Kato of Sexual Minorities Uganda, was beaten to death. It garnered global dismay.

Kato's death warrant was metaphorically signed in December 2009 when he spoke at a United Nations-sponsored conference about the bill where according to Wikileaks he was mocked with homophobic jeers. Also leaked was that Bahati railed against Obama's opposition to the bill while speaking before the conference.

Kato's horrific end seems to have been the impetus for the defeat of the death penalty section of the bill earlier this year. Warren was compelled along with various of his confederate Christians to denounce the death penalty aspect. However, other sections of the bill are up for debate and could still be passed. Conservative tax-exempt American Christians have opened a Pandora's Box. One can only wonder, what would Jesus think? ■

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# MARRY ME MINNESOTA LAWSUIT BREAKS RANKS

Three Minnesota couples are suing the state, a divisive move that many marriage equality supporters say will do more harm than good in the 2012 ballot battle

Marry Me Minnesota, composed of three Minnesota same-sex couples suing the state to get rid of the Defense of Marriage Act, has not been getting the full support of the Minnesota GLBT community.

Some Minnesota marriage equality advocates said they support the aim of Marry Me Minnesota, but not the means. Some said that the lawsuit, which went to Minnesota Court of Appeals on October 26 for oral argument, is not likely to succeed and, if it fails, would be a major setback in the fight for marriage equality.

In September 2008, Project 515, Out-Front Minnesota, and Rainbow Families (now Family Equality Council) issued a joint statement opposing lawsuits as a strategy to gain marriage equality.

Ann Kaner-Roth, executive director of Project 515, said the groups hold the same position three years later: that same-sex couples should be treated equally under Minnesota law, but proceeding with a lawsuit is not the best strategy.

The statement says: "Because progress toward full marriage equality in other states



has often been the result of court litigation, it is tempting to consider initiating a court challenge to Minnesota's current bans on marriage for gay and lesbian couples. However, filing lawsuits in Minnesota is not the best approach at this time and in fact poses a significant risk to achieving marriage equality."

The groups and the plaintiffs in the case share the same aspirations for marriage in Minnesota, but the ranks in the battle for marriage equality have broken on the method, according to Phil Duran, OutFront Minnesota's legal director.

"These organizations share the commitment to marriage equality, but these organizations have reached the conclusion that this approach is more likely to be harmful than helpful," Duran said.

Duran said the case could cause unintended consequences by setting another harmful precedent, like the 1971 *Baker v. Nelson* case that determined only heterosexual couples are able to get married in Minnesota, which already is a major hurdle for the *Marry Me Minnesota* case to clear. "Here's the reality: change takes a long time," Duran said. He said the cards are stacked against the plaintiffs and an unsuccessful attempt in court would mean a push in the wrong direction.

Duran said that the court, overall, is judicially conservative, meaning it is unlikely to spur a dramatic policy change as a result of the case and is more likely to hand it off to the legislature.

"The court may surprise us: the plaintiffs could win," Duran said. "It seems unlikely."

The organizations will continue to fight the marriage amendment, Duran said, to stop discrimination based on sexual orientation from being enshrined in the state constitution.

"The key effort that needs to be made is defeating the marriage amendment," Duran said.

"If that gets passed, the outcome of the lawsuit doesn't really matter. From our standpoint, that's where we are focusing our efforts."

"I don't think the lawsuit is well advised," DFL Sen. Scott Dibble said. "It stands a small chance."

Dibble said that the case does not have the "foundational elements" in the Minnesota Constitution that allowed other similar lawsuits, like the California case fighting Proposition 8, to succeed.

"I'm sorry [the lawsuit] is proceeding," Dibble said. He said if it does not succeed, "not only does that establish precedent, it diminishes legislative appetite [and] adds another indication that perhaps we're not ready as a state to do this."

Dale Carpenter, a University of Minnesota professor of civil rights and civil liberties law, said the lawsuit actually fueled proponents of the marriage amendment to put the debate in the hands of the electorate.

"[The lawsuit] was used by opponents of gay marriage for a reason to have an amendment. [In other words], they said if we don't decide this by vote of the people then the courts are going to force it onto us," Carpenter said. "They started using it and that was a successful argument."

Carpenter said the *Marry Me Minnesota* case has already done damage.

"This lawsuit has helped to cause a considerable amount of damage to the cause of gay marriage," Carpenter said. "It was unintentional. The couples are doing this with the best intentions. It would've been far wiser to hold off...it would be beneficial to drop the lawsuit."

Carpenter said he understands why the plaintiffs were tired of waiting for change, but the lawsuit was not the best strategy from a legal standpoint.

"I really feel for these people," Carpenter

said. "I know that they're trying to do good, but [the lawsuit] really is harming the cause in a lot of ways."

Doug Benson, a plaintiff in the case, said it "feels like betrayal" that the community he has been fighting alongside for decades is not supporting the lawsuit.

Benson said he tried the legislative route. He helped push a bill into the house with Representative Phyllis Kahn, DFL-Minneapolis, as the chief author, which failed, and at one point, he said, he went to the capitol to protest every day.

Benson fought in the legislature to no avail. Benson said that too much time had gone by with no progress made towards marriage equality in the state and felt something had to be done.

"Almost a generation has passed and there has been absolutely no progress on gay rights in the state," Benson said. In fall of 2008, *Marry Me Minnesota* was incorporated and the lawsuit was filed May 2010.

Benson said he would not wait around for someone else to step up and the lack of support by local non-profit GLBT advocacy groups is no deterrent.

"Our philosophy throughout this is: it is the duty of citizens to come forward and that's what we are doing," Benson said. "Why should we wait for some other group of people to do something?"

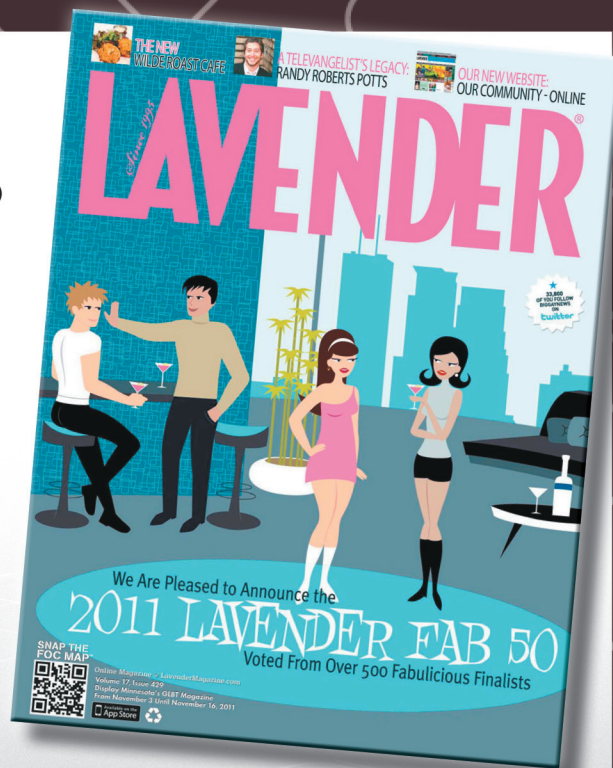
He added, "We're not sitting still. The real issue that needs to be dealt with is being dealt with now. We have just got to keep plugging away at it."

Rep. Phyllis Kahn said she can see both sides of the argument and cannot predict the outcome of the case.

"People have been wrong before how things will go," Kahn said. She added, "I'm neither encouraging them. I understand both positions." ■



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## COMMENTARY

Robert Easley

# Does it Make a Difference, the Color of the Ball?

THERE WERE 12 minutes to go in the pregame shoot-around. The first game of the WNBA Finals at the Target Center was off the hook with energy. The audience spilled into the Target Center like cascading water. It was apparent early on that this was a special night. The very first appearance of the Lynx in the finals was not only historical, it was FUN!

Arriving early affords the opportunity to watch the relationship between players, in relaxed game mode. I watched the ease with which the Lynx team went through their drills and shoot-arounds. They were relaxed-fluid, and precise, as a team. The bricks are the media favorites on any team that get the most media attention. The other 60% of the team are the undecorated cement. It is the undecorated cement that give teams character and, when needed, can and will get up!

One undecorated moment happened between Whalen and Hornbuckle. On the conclusion of the shoot-around, Whalen shot Hornbuckle a sharp pass and Hornbuckle pulled up and hit a crisp 28-footer. This pass and shoot repeated two more times, with Hornbuckle hitting most of the shots. Hornbuckle stopped the action and implored, dared, challenged Whalen to send her the same crisp pass ...BUT... through Whalen's legs. One hard pass, one bounce, directly to hands. Whalen looked at Hornbuckle who passively pressured, more imploring than chiding, but she wouldn't accept "no" either.

Continued on page 64



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The MVP brick and veteran cement looked at each other and, with no words spoken, Whalen whipped a perfect one-bounce pass to Hornbuckle. Without hitch or hesitation, Hornbuckle pulled up and drilled a three-pointer. Both smiled. Just another pass, nothing big...a case of a brick and the undecorated cement that bonds it. The brick got to add a new pass to her already impressive arsenal. The cement veteran did what she does naturally; supportively challenges, adds a little “veteran funk,” then relaxes and teaches. But for those ten minutes Hornbuckle also hit every shot.

Both were ready for whatever the night would bring. On their way to a championship they were teammates, equal, single minded, determined!

As our society clumsily grapples with some of the more mundane and almost laughable issues, like our military’s “don’t ask don’t tell” policy, obvious questions slide out and stink up the room like a silent fart. One significant question might be: If you had the mightiest democratic military in history, would it really make a difference if some of its members were or were not gay in its functioning? Or in observing archaic same-sex prohibitive marriage laws a similar question might be posed: What state can legitimate who loves whom? Or, many Church edicts on who shall and shall not minister based on gender. Once again, let us all ask: Does God really care? It should be noted that that religion, like the military, is a team very much like an athletic team—and that all teams needs winners to perpetuate and continually grow into a positive supportive system.

We all want to be part of a winning system or team—whether that be athletic or patriotic, local or national. We want to be part of a “Winner.”

Maybe, as a whole, healthy, high-functioning societal family, we want to view our Minnesota Lynx team as an athletic example of the type of societal team we want to be a part of.

By utilizing our best community asset—the Minnesota Lynx—as an example, let us review and reclaim those traits and behav-

iors that can bring out our highest character as a community.

Although the Lynx as a team has a hierarchy, the team members think of themselves as just that—a team. Each individual has value, mutual respect, a sense of belonging, and all are given opportunity to support that value by contributing to a larger good, which is called a team.

Some were drafted higher or went to bigger schools with larger-budget athletic programs, but does it really make a difference to a teammate what school you went to? Can Whalen not play with Moore because U Conn has more gifts than the U of M? It sounds silly, but much of our society is fractionalized by much of the same type of silly logic. PEOPLE from divergent points can work, build, and play well together—if they have the will to do so.

While each member of the Lynx team was mentored and coached under different programs by different coaches; can they all come together under one common philosophy and contribute what they have learned individually? You bet they can! That is, if they have the common will to do so. The Twin Cities are a collage of nationalities and regionalities, and that diversity could prove to be the best feature of our society. That is if we have the common will to employ that diversity for the community good.

The Lynx deliberately went to great effort to develop its second team to be as strong and capable as its first, or starting team. Perhaps we could develop and put extra effort in supporting those on our “societal” second team. The results may surprise us in the short run, and become key players down the stretch. A little extra effort and a little more playing time works wonders in the positive development in the entire team.

The Minnesota Lynx team did not draft players based on skin color. It has not often been pointed out that Lyndsey Whalen is the only white player on the team—I don’t think we really noticed. It is a good thing that nobody notices, or cares. It is only proven that Lyndsey is a bad sista’ on what-

ever team she plays—regardless of the predominant pigmentation. The example there and that we should be teaching our children is: Learn to be patient and don’t broadcast how great you are—track with the system, not above it. If you’re good you can play anyplace with anyone or on any team confidently, enthusiastically, not with in-your-face false bravado that often accompanies super athletes. The Lynx built a sanctuary-fortress that home support provides.

If you had a great team, or a great system in the making or currently existent, would you require the members of the team to inform you and the rest of the world who was gay? First of all, it’s none of your damn business, secondly, but more importantly, it doesn’t make any difference. All parties who have displayed their competence and willingness to be part of that system based on hard work, personal effort, and loyalty (to that system or team) makes themselves unrestricted teammates. Period!

Can you look at the Lynx roster and say with total certainty who is gay? No you cannot. And, in the context that makes the only difference—regarding them as teammates—it makes no difference at all. They are the WORLD CHAMPIONS.

Let us develop a society full of Champions by allowing the things that make no difference to fall by the wayside and re-examining the good things within our reach to serve as examples of what we can be while there is still time for us to “win the big one.”

The Lynx are the new face of what was. Minneapolis and St. Paul, as well as the state of Minnesota, have changed in both demographics, color, sensitivity, and realities. Some changes have been for the better, some changes have and are simply CHANGE. In the currency of “now” the only thing that matters is our ability, our commitment to a grand dream, a well thought-out plan to get us there, and the common belief that “together” we can conquer obstacles to share fruits of our labor and, indeed, WIN THE BIG ONE. Our society just needed the Minnesota Lynx to show us how! ■



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**Dear Ms. Behavior:**

Tom has been my best friend forever. He's everything you could want in a friend: fun, fashionable, and loyal. He's helped me move in with countless girlfriends, and always has a room for me when I move back out.

Here's the problem. Every few weeks, he stands me up. We'll have plans to go to the movies or to dinner, and when I stop by to get him, he hems and haws about some adorable boy who's on his way over to give him dick.

I'm glad when Tom gets some. I'm just not thrilled about the repeat timing of the dick du jour arriving two minutes before we're supposed to go out. Usually Tom is sheepish enough to turn red, shuffle his Nike's, and apologize like mad. He sends me off to the restaurant alone, promising to show up before dessert. Usually he does. I forgive him because he apologizes so profusely. But then I feel upset later, and unsure of what it means. Am I really that disposable? Is there some hidden, underlying reason in Tom's psyche about disappointing me?

I am getting sick of it! I'm going to stop making plans with him if he doesn't grow up (Did I mention he's 45 – too old for this behavior, right?).

—SLOPPY SECONDS

**Dear Sloppy Seconds:**

Tom's wiener addiction is not about you and whether or not you're lovable. Men who are, shall we say, phallically motivated, have no "hidden, underlying" reasons for the timing of their interludes. Tom has no reason to purposely disappoint you. He's just a dickhound.

Still, his behavior is juvenile and rude.

If you too had a dick to withhold, your annoyance at his antics would have more sway. But do you at least tell him that it hurts your feelings?

Tom's pre-emptive apology is a strategy designed to keep you from expressing your anger. It's the same reason your dog crawls to greet you at the door after he's dragged orange peels and coffee grinds (and tampons if you're extra lucky) from your garbage can for the 700th time. You may not recognize the choreographic similarity, but Tom, like your doggy, hopes his dance of submission will soften your wrath.

Your inability to confront Tom probably makes it easier for him to cancel plans with you. Going back to the dog analogy, some trainers recommend lightly tapping a garbage-eating pup on the snout with a newspaper. Since Tom's snout is not, in his case, the errant organ, perhaps you'll think of a suitable (of course, metaphorical) alternative.

**Dear Ms. Behavior:**

My boyfriend says that lesbian sex can consist of two females locking up and transferring urine into the other partner. Is this true? Please send a reply.

Thank You.

—LAURA

**Dear Laura:**

Since your return e-mail address is from a university, Ms. Behavior can only speculate that you are an innocent young undergraduate, and your boyfriend is a wise PhD candidate in a rocket science program.

Your boyfriend, though perhaps well-

meaning, has told you only a partial truth about lesbian sex, probably because he worries that if you knew it all, you'd be so enraptured with the fantasy that you would leave him for a woman.

So, Ms. Behavior is here to tell you the whole truth: In addition to the lovely locking up and urine transfer, lesbians engage in these other rituals of pleasure:

1) Lesbians shave their heads, anoint them with oils, and rub them together while singing songs about the patriarchy.

2) Lesbians gather their Barbie dolls, remove their dresses and their heads, and make them lie on top of each other. They enjoy watching these icons of femininity get it on, since they were punished for stripping and beheading Barbie and Skipper as children.

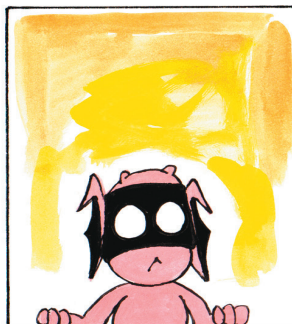
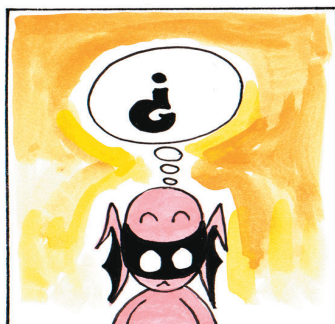
3) Lesbians eat juicy, musky fruit, like mangoes, over each other's naked bodies. They become aroused and often reach orgasm at the mere sight of anything slippery or drippy.

4) Sexual rituals for lesbians involve filling their bedrooms with provocative flowers and food, such as irises, pussy willows, oysters, and Kit Kat bars. Besides their obvious affinity for feline companions, they are aroused by any linguistic or visual allusion to female genitalia.

Please do not watch so-called erotic movies about lesbianism, because they will give you (and your boyfriend) the wrong idea. Only the least socially and culturally evolved lesbians engage in such base activities as rubbing naked bodies together, touching each other with their hands, or pleasuring each other with their mouths. □

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I've said my piece.





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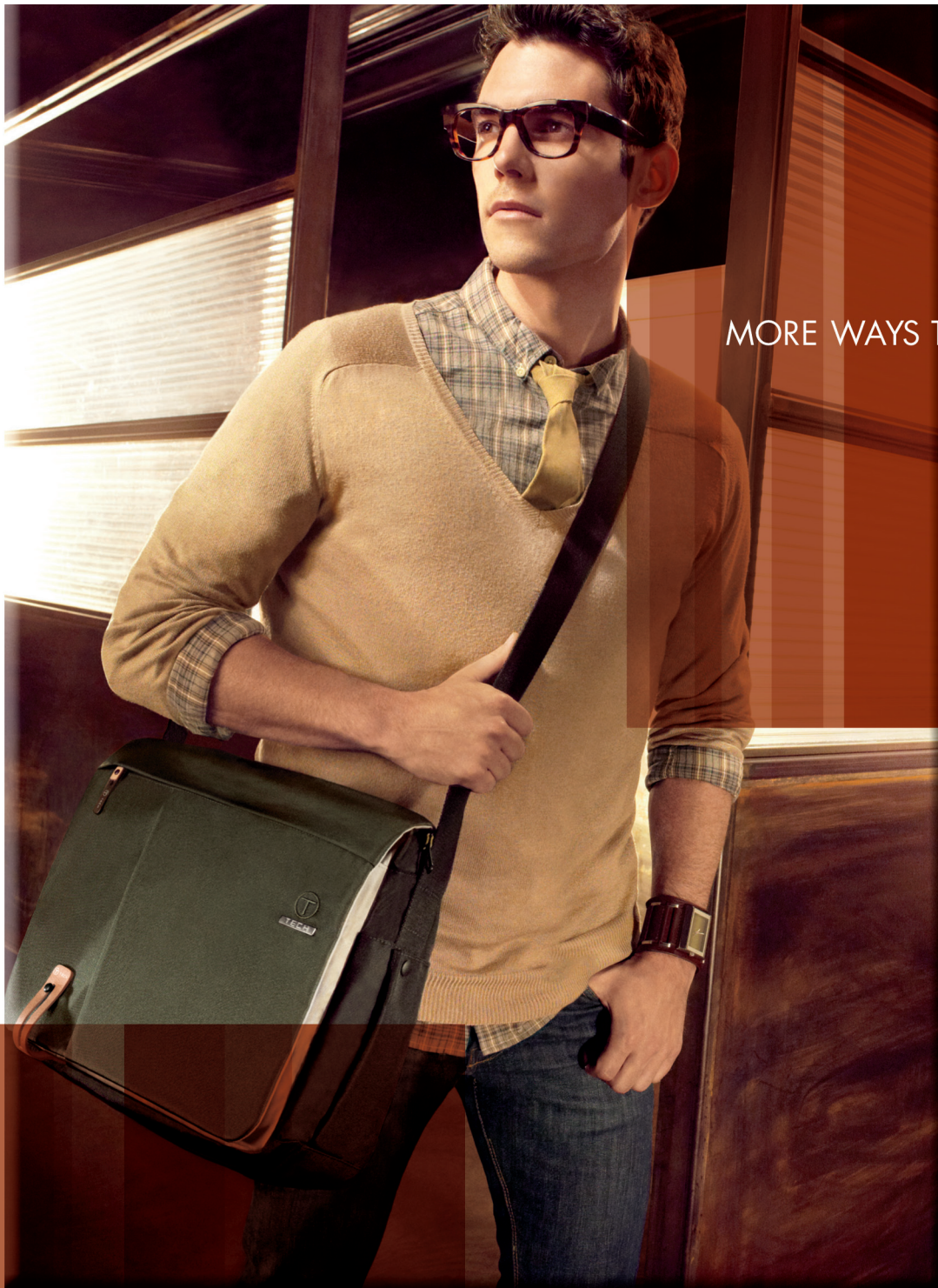
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